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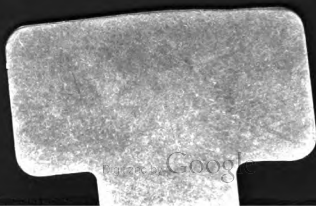
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PRIESTS AND PHILOSOPHERS.

BY THE

REV. W. GRESLEY,

VICAR OF BOYNE HILL, AND PREBENDARY OF LICHFIELD.



LONDON:

JOSEPH MASTERS, 78, NEW BOND STREET.

MDCCCLXXIII.

270. 9. 483.

LONDON :
PRINTED BY J. MASTERS AND SON,
ALBION BUILDINGS, BARTHOLOMEW CLOSE, E.C.

P R E F A C E.

I HAVE endeavoured in the following pages to set forth the relative position of God's Ministers, and those philosophers of the present day who oppose their ministrations. I have carefully endeavoured to avoid the prevailing error of complimenting men for their cleverness whose principles I utterly condemn. My aim has been to speak strongly and in plain terms of the fearful wrong which non-Christian philosophers are doing; nor have I scrupled to laugh at their absurdities.

Surely in these days of light and knowledge to mistake in the great object for which life is given us is the height of folly, and to lead others into the same state of error is to be the instrument of the greatest wrong which can be committed.

I heartily wish that others more able than myself would speak out what they must surely feel.

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PRIESTS AND PHILOSOPHERS.

CHAPTER I.

**THE AGGRESSIVENESS OF PHILOSOPHERS.—MR. WALLACE'S
PLAN FOR ABOLISHING PRIESTS.—PROFESSOR HUXLEY.—
HIS STYLE OF CONTROVERSY OBJECTED TO.—A BETTER
PROPOSED.**

It is an unfortunate circumstance of the present times that the Ministers of CHRIST are obliged to defend themselves and their flocks against the attacks of men who ought in truth to be amongst the greatest helps in forwarding the glory of GOD, but who most strangely have come to be amongst the principal adversaries of religious truth,—I mean, of course, some who call themselves Philosophers and men of science.

Half a century ago science was confined chiefly to the few who specially devoted themselves to its cultivation, and was but little canvassed by the public. Now, on the contrary, scientific men court popularity and influence. They have their

public meetings, and get together a number of ladies and gentlemen to hear and admire them. They have their magazines and reviews in which scientific subjects are discussed. In short, they seem to wish the different branches of science to be brought as much as possible before the public. And what is much to be noted, the public meetings on science, and the discussions in periodicals, at least in some of them, are not directed to the enlargement of science by new discoveries,—new discoveries are made in the study or the laboratory by the devoted workers in each department; but all this public discussion seems to have rather an ethical bearing. It answers the purpose of Church Congresses, Nonconformist gatherings, Conservative and Radical meetings, and its design is to influence the minds of men with regard to the moral value of science in comparison with other departments of knowledge. Scientific men aspire to exercise a control over the belief and conduct of the present generation. I am myself no enemy of science,—far from it: I used to take much interest in it before my time and thoughts were occupied by the duties of the priesthood. I greatly admire the ability of those who have so much enlarged the boundaries of science in the last and present generation. And, I believe, that rightly viewed, science is calculated to advance the highest interests of mankind. And this is

in truth the line of argument which I propose to take—namely, to point out the true value of science and its bearing on the moral and intellectual advancement of the human race.

I wish to treat the subject in a popular manner, and, if I should sometimes seem to speak rather lightly of what men of science deem important matters, and which really are so, if rightly viewed, I hope they will believe that I have no sort of prejudice against science itself, but only a doubt, or rather a conviction, that the subject has not always been treated in the most rational and advantageous manner.

An amusing paper appeared in the April number of *Macmillan's Magazine*, in which "that able and eminent man of science, Mr. Wallace," as the editor calls him, "puts forth in strong and uncompromising terms a plan for the practical and beneficial mode of applying the national property now held by the Church, and of preserving and utilizing for national objects the parish churches and other ecclesiastical buildings spread so thickly over our land, and which constitute a picturesque and impressive record of much of our social and religious history for more than a thousand years."

Mr. Wallace's plan is simply this,—to abolish all rectors, vicars, and incumbents of the Church of England; at least, to relieve them all of their

property; or rather to suffer the present occupants to die out without appointing others; and substitute in their places certain national parochial rectors, who need be of no particular religion, "but shall be up to the highest intellectual level of the age," and shall before their appointment "pass a much more rigid examination, and furnish better evidence of temper and moral character (!) than is now required,—men of intellectual culture, refined manners, and moral character," "and above all things, free from sectarian teaching." "The narrow education, imperfect training, and sectarian prejudices of the clergy of the Established Church (!) prevent their opinions having much weight, either with the public at large or the Government. But the national rector would be in a very different position."

There is one great objection, Mr. Wallace thinks, to this plan of abolishing the Church of England, and substituting these secular rectors. Some people may think it Utopian! To destroy the Church of God root and branch, confiscate the endowments which have been given by the piety of our ancestors, in order that the poor as well as the rich throughout the land might be instructed in their duty to God and man, to deprive hundreds, thousands perhaps, of our parishes of Christian instruction and sacraments, of a

minister of religion, who shall baptize their children, marry their young men and maidens, bury their dead,—to hand over their parsonages and glebes to secular men, and make our ancient churches places “for interesting and instructive series of lectures,”—the chief objection to this notable scheme is that it may be thought Utopian ! too good to be practicable ! Well, that is an odd way of putting it. At any rate, it shows what philosophers have got in their heads. Mr. Wallace’s scheme, if brought about, would have the advantage of securing some 5,000 or 6,000 nice appointments for his brother philosophers, who, he says, shall be “as good as judges.”

It would be a curious thing to speculate what could be the object of a man like Mr. Wallace in writing such an article. The editor himself thinks it right to apologise for its insertion. “The views,” he says, “set forth in the following article may strike many of the readers of *Macmillan* as both novel and hazardous, . . . inadequate, or even problematical.” The chief value of them is to show the animus of a particular party, the intense scorn and dislike with which they regard the ministers of God’s Church, the way in which they would treat them if they got the chance. Mr. Wallace’s conclusion is worth considering as showing the notions of his party. “We are,” he says, “actually in the possession

of an elaborate organization, and an ample property handed down to us by our forefathers, with whom it did at one time fulfil many of the high functions which I wish to restore to it. We have suffered it to remain in the hands of a *narrow religious corporation*, which in no sufficient degree represents either the most cultivated intelligence, or the highest morality of the age, and which by its dogmatic theology and resistance to progress, has become out of harmony both with the best and least educated portion of the community." How sad it is that a man like Mr. Wallace should thus vilify and insult a body of men like the English clergy. I do not think that the clergy have any such bitter, ill-natured feeling against men of science, as Mr. Wallace exhibits against the clergy. When the Christian religion is attacked, it is, of course, their bounden duty to stand up for what they conscientiously believe to be truth. They would be cowards and traitors if they did not. Why should philosophers adopt this tone towards them? Mr. Wallace is, I believe, a fair specimen of his class. Surely he cannot be so ignorant of the state of things in this civilized land as to believe that our bishops and clergy generally can be justly charged with sectarian prejudices, narrow education, imperfect training. He must be aware that there are amongst the more eminent of them men of the

highest culture, and the most enlarged views,—that there is no body of men throughout the world more devoted to their self-chosen task of doing all the good they can in their generation.

Another gentleman, a writer in the *Contemporary Review* for September, 1873, asks, “Are not the clergy notorious for their rancour, their narrow-mindedness, their multiform prejudices, their incapacity for seeing truth in any other aspect than that in which old world formularies exhibit it? Have they any sympathy with the restless activity which marks the age?” What is all this but saying that the clergy do not agree with this writer in his opinions, and think that religious truth is something fixed and enduring, not an affair of “restless activity?” Whence arises this tone of asperity against men, who, as a body, are devoted to the spiritual and temporal good of mankind? It is a sad and unworthy jealousy. But the case being so, I see no help for it, but that the clergy and their friends should defend themselves with all their strength against these most uncourteous and unwarrantable attacks,—not in the same spirit of supercilious contempt, but with the calm and strong sense of confident rectitude.

Amongst our nineteenth-century philosophers none is more dogmatic and pugnacious than Professor Huxley. Most men of science endea-

vour, or at least affect, to reconcile science with the Christian Faith. Professor Huxley, on the contrary, does his utmost to show their discrepancy. "The improver of natural knowledge," he says, "absolutely refuses to acknowledge authority as such. For him scepticism is the highest of duties: blind faith the one unpardonable sin. And it cannot be otherwise, for every great advance in natural knowledge has involved the absolute rejection of authority, the cherishing the keenest scepticism, the annihilation of the spirit of blind faith. . . . The man of science has learned to believe in justification, not by faith, but by verification." ("Lay Sermons," p. 22.) Again,—"The whole of modern thought is steeped in science. . . . The greatest intellectual revolution mankind has ever yet seen is now slowly taking place by its agency." (P. 130.) "Plague, pestilence, and famine, are admitted by *all but fools* [those, for instance, who say their prayers in church] to be the natural result of causes for the most part fully within human control, and not the unavoidable tortures inflicted by wrathful Omnipotence upon His helpless handiwork." (P. 311.) Thank you, Mr. Professor, you are very polite. Some have thought that the folly is not all on our side.

"Go, wondrous creature, mount where Science guides,
Go, measure earth, weigh air, and state the tides,

Instruct the planets in what orbs to run,
Correct old Time, and regulate the sun.

* * * *

Go, teach Eternal Wisdom how to rule,
Then drop into thyself, and be—a fool,”—POPE.

What must strike the readers of these extracts is the curiously unfair and illogical manner in which the philosopher seems to think that he can take in the unwary by a dexterous handling of words. One is almost surprised that a man of Professor Huxley's knowledge of the world should for one moment imagine that his readers were so simple as to be deceived by such verbiage. He declares that none but fools imagine that plague, pestilence, and famine are the “unavoidable tortures inflicted by wrathful Omnipotence upon His helpless handiwork.” Evidently this does not touch this question. What the philosopher has to prove is no such nonsense as this; but that plague, pestilence, and famine are not the just judgments of Almighty God upon sinners, which, nevertheless, may be averted for the most part by timely repentance.

Take, again, the expression used in the former extract—“Scepticism,” he says, “is the highest of duties; *blind* faith the unpardonable sin . . . every great advancement in natural knowledge has involved the absolute rejection of authority, the cherishing of the keenest scepticism, the annihilation of the spirit of blind faith.” *Blind*

faith! Does not the professor see that the very epithet which he puts in for the sake apparently of strengthening his argument, absolutely annihilates it? Who ever advocated a blind faith? One would think he had in his mind the case of people taken in by some foolish hoax, and was warning his readers against being made April fools. It is not a *blind* faith, but a reasonable faith, an enlightened faith—a holy, loving faith—that is the sort of faith which the Christian advocates—not a blind faith. Faith, says an excellent writer, “is the highest act of reason, because it is a reliance on perfect Wisdom and Truth.” And not only in religion, but in every department of life, it may be safely said, that a reasonable faith, a due regard for testimony, a just deference to authority, is the basis of the whole human system. Suppose Professor Huxley, in his good nature, condescended to explain to an unsophisticated rustic some of the well-known facts or principles of science, and told him that the sun stood stationary in the heavens, and the earth was a spherical globe continually moving; he would be rather disgusted if his pupil turned round upon him, “Don’t tell me such a pack of stuff—don’t I see the sun rise every morning in the east, and move across the sky to the west? and, surely, I may believe my own eyes. And as to the earth being round, I once went twenty

miles by rail and it was as flat as a bowling-green all the way." Would our philosopher applaud the man's scepticism as the highest of all duties, and congratulate him on having avoided the unpardonable sin of blind faith? Or would he not rather set him down a conceited ass? So, if a clergyman spoke to one of his parishioners of the great mercy of God in sending the former and latter rains, and reserving the appointed weeks for harvest, and exhorted him to be thankful to God for causing the corn to grow in the fields, and the fruits in their season; it would be rather a disappointment for him to hear in answer to his pious exhortation, "Don't tell me about God making the things to grow, I tell you they all grow of themselves; you have nothing to do but sow what you want, wheat or potatoes, or mangold-wurzel, and they come up of their own accord. If it's a good season we have a good crop, and if it's a bad one, why we have a bad crop, that's all." O most amiable sceptic, most rare philosopher! the Professor would say. Others, perhaps, would think the man simply a fool.

It may be worth while to carry out our illustration of this "highest of duties" somewhat further. We surely may suppose our sceptical working man—nay, we may hear him, I fear—going much beyond this in his scepticism. "You

tell me of a God that rules the world, and about heaven and hell, but I don't believe a word of it. You tell us if we get drunk, and swear, and steal, and do other wicked things, we shall go to hell. I never saw anybody who had been to hell ; how am I to know there is such a place ? It is all very well for you rich people who have got hold of all the good things of the world to try and keep us poor folks contented, by telling us we shall go to heaven if we are good, and to hell if we are wicked. But we're not children now, we have learned to be philosophers, and know a thing or two. If it was not for the police, and the soldiers, we would soon help ourselves to some of the things which you keep so safe now. You gentry have got some good wine in your cellars, and plate and money in your houses. Perhaps before long we shall come and help ourselves, and take our chance of going to hell for it."

This is simply the carrying out of Professor Huxley's philosophy, " the cherishing the keenest scepticism and the annihilation of the spirit of blind faith."

To my mind the truest philosophy would teach us that most human affairs rest on faith—not a blind faith, but a reasonable and enlightened faith. When the first ideas break on the mind of a child it is faith in his parents' instruction which is the medium through which he obtains

knowledge. At school the authority of his teacher is the chief means of his advancement in culture. What are the first lectures of the Professor but authoritative exhibitions of the principles of science? If the pupil refused to accept anything which was not made perfectly plain to his understanding he would make but poor progress in art or science. How can a man possibly learn anything about geography if he disbelieves in the existence of any country which he has not seen? How is it possible to prove to any man that England and Ireland are two separate islands, or that America is on the other side of the Atlantic, or that London has nearly three millions of inhabitants, and that the Lord Mayor lives at the Mansion House, or that the Queen went last week from Windsor to Balmoral, or that the funds rose $\frac{2}{8}$ per cent. yesterday—if people will not believe anything which cannot be proved to demonstration?

Of course there is such a thing as credulity. Men have believed many lies to their cost. Many have been deluded by designing agitators, by sceptical writers, to their eternal ruin. Eve believed the Devil when he told her that she might eat of the forbidden fruit and not die. Sinful curiosity caused her ruin. The Christian preacher declares to men that there is a great God of Heaven and Earth, the Maker and Ruler

of the universe, our Friend and FATHER. He recounts the history of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, which has been handed down by infallible testimony, believed by the Church for eighteen hundred years, accepted by the best and wisest of men, as the rule of life and the hope of immortality. The philosophers (some philosophers, I should say) tell us there is no GOD Who is the Maker and Ruler of all things ; that the visible world came he cannot tell how, and goes on of its own accord, that there is no heaven or hell, no responsibility after this life. Our moral condition now as for eternity depends on which testimony we will accept. The Christian Divine has the testimony of ages, the authority of the best and wisest : the philosopher has nothing to allege in behalf of his scepticism, but his own private opinion. But then the system which he upholds has this advantage—that it allows him who embraces it to follow the devices of his own heart, indulge freely his lusts and passions without fear of future retribution ; and so, not without misgivings, he accepts it. The heart of another is accessible to Divine grace ; he acknowledges the justice and the love of God, recognizes the power and the wisdom of the Great Ruler of Heaven, and yields himself in humble obedience to the laws. One believes and is saved ; the other refuses to believe and is lost.

With all his obvious incapacity to judge of the various sources of knowledge, Mr. Huxley is singularly contemptuous of those who differ from him. "If," he says, "man is not to be considered a reasoning being, unless he asks what his sensations are, and why they are, what is a Hottentot, or an Australian black-fellow, or what the 'swinked hedger' of an ordinary agricultural district?—*nay, what becomes of an average country squire or parson?*" I know nothing of the Professor's antecedents, his birth, parentage, and education. But I certainly supposed that he had sufficient knowledge of the world and of the usages of society, to be aware that this sort of contemptuous language with regard to classes of persons is not becoming. It is perhaps too much the habit of controversialists to flatter each other with over-smooth language, but this writer goes out of his way to show his contempt. One would think he knew nothing of country squires and parsons but from Fielding's description of Squire Western and Parson Adams in the last century—even then caricatures. He seems quite unaware that men of highest culture are to be found amongst those whom he ridicules, and that as classes the English clergy and landowners of the present generation, might well be compared for manly intelligence with any other classes in the world.

I would venture to propose that a mutual compact should be entered into between Priests and Philosophers, namely, that while contending earnestly for the Truth, they should abstain from calling names and using opprobrious epithets one towards another. Must not Mr. Wallace admit, in his calmer moments, that it is not highly cultured language, when he says of the clergy that they are "a narrow religious corporation which in no sufficient degree represents the most cultivated intelligence or the highest morality of the age," implying that they are both ignorant and immoral? Must not Professor Huxley regret that he has written such language as that "none but fools pray to be delivered from 'plague, pestilence and famine?'" I, for my part, strongly advise my friends to refrain from calling men of science, even if they be uncourteous and provoking, "philosophical prigs" or "addle-pated professors." It would tend very much to the maintenance of Christian courtesy if such epithets were abstained from on both sides. At the same time I would never counsel the abstinence from plain and serious speaking. A spade should be called a spade. If a man does not believe in God I see not by what other name he can be designated but an atheist; if a man rejects the Christian religion he is an infidel; if he believes in a sort of *anima mundi*, or law or order of nature,

he is a pantheist. So, if a man believes the doctrines of the Christian Church he should be called orthodox, or bigoted, if you please, for that means earnest and zealous. But we object to be called "Bibliolaters," "Philistines," fanatics, and the like. Surely our differences might be more profitably discussed without the use of such unparliamentary language.

CHAPTER II.

NO SORT OF REASON FOR THIS UNNATURAL JEALOUSY
BETWEEN PHILOSOPHERS AND DIVINES.—PHILOSOPHERS
MOST IN THE WRONG.—THE QUESTION TESTED BY THE
NUMBER OF EMINENT MEN ON EITHER SIDE.

THIS unnatural jealousy between divines and philosophers is the more to be deplored because there is really no cause for it. Each party might pursue its separate course if it would, without collision—nay, rather, with mutual benefit. Unhappily an evil influence has come between them. And I must say that the chief blame rests with the philosophers, though, strangely enough, they seem to think that the theologians are to blame. “In this nineteenth century,” says Professor Huxley, “as at the dawn of modern physical science, the cosmogony of the semi-barbarous Hebrew, is the incubus of the philosopher, and the opprobrium of the orthodox. Who can number the patient and earnest seekers after truth, from the days of Galileo until now, whose lives have been embittered, and their good name blasted by the mistaken zeal of bibliolaters? Who can

count the host of weaker men whose sense of truth has been destroyed in the effort to harmonize impossibilities, whose life has been wasted in the attempt to force the generous new wine of science into the old bottles of Judaism?"¹ This is not fair or candid. Surely the Christian minister might say with much more truth and sadness, Who shall number the once Christian souls, once hopeful of salvation through CHRIST, whose minds have been perplexed, whose lives have been embittered, and, alas it is too probable, whose souls have been lost by the thoughtless cavils, and ill-considered theories, and rash speculations of so-called philosophers vaunting the flavour of the new wine of science when the old is better. Who can contemplate without a shudder the eternal consequence to immortal souls of the vagaries of science falsely so called?

Theologians are not at all disposed to thwart or to disparage men of science in their own department. It is only when philosophers needlessly interfere in matters which do not belong to them, that religious zeal and truthfulness force the divine to resist intrusion into his province. When men of science have made some real discovery, the Christian divine at once acquiesces. A century ago the general opinion was that this earth which we inhabit was about 6,000 years old. When

¹ Lay Sermons, 305. No. 2.

geologists brought forward evidence that its history covered millions of ages, the theologians recognised cheerfully the truth of the discovery. And so they do always gladly hail any of the really great and magnificent discoveries of science. But when the man of science broaches a theory that there was no Creator,—or that the Creator takes no care of the work which He has made, but suffers it to take its course under fixed and immutable laws, the Christian divine rightly demands some proof of his assertions. When another man of science sets himself against the whole course of Christian opinion, and asserts that man, instead of being created by God in His own image, is but the development of an ape, or that the ancestors of civilized man were mere savages, that to believe in miracles is impossible, something of a feeling of indignation naturally springs up in the mind of the Christian at hearing such reckless assertions made without the shadow of proof or even probability. I do not think that some of our modern philosophers allow themselves to consider how extremely offensive it is to those who conscientiously believe the Bible, and whose whole lives are directed in conformity with its doctrines,—to hear what they are accustomed to reverence quietly set aside by men who really have no evidence whatever to show for many of their opinions, who deliberately reject

all the accustomed rules of logical argument. What can possibly fill the mind of a Christian minister with greater pain and sorrow than when a philosopher recklessly and cruelly endeavours to disparage the efficacy of prayer for instance, which is the very key-stone of holiness here, and happiness hereafter?

I would just ask the sceptical philosopher to compare together the results of the two systems. First, let him ask himself what would be the consequence to mankind if it turned out that Christianity was a fable: secondly, what would be the consequences if it turned out that his own philosophy, so far as it contradicted Christianity, was entirely false. Supposing for a moment that this world were the only scene of our existence, and that the Resurrection and Judgment were myths, how would mankind have been affected as regards the concerns of this world only, if they were persuaded to live as Christians? Is it not a fact that there are twenty thousand clergy in England alone, spread over the country, whose duty and occupation it is to do all the good they can to those amongst whom they live, to train up the young in habits of truth and honesty, to inculcate amongst the people the principles of good conduct, charity, conscientiousness,—to spread everywhere the moral teachings of CHRIST and His Apostles? “Blessed are the pure in heart,

for they shall see God. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love. Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Recompense no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. Let us walk honestly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. Owe no man anything, but to love one another." Will the opponent of Christianity venture to assert that the constant presentation of precepts like these to the minds of the people has not very largely the effect of producing the results of virtue and honest living: that there are multitudes of good men and women who have been influenced to lead just and holy lives by the inculcation of Christian precepts,—not to speak now of the eternal benefits which we who are believers in CHRIST have no doubt will result from a life of faith and virtue.

Take now the contrary view, suppose the infidel philosopher to establish an opinion amongst men generally that Christian doctrine is a fable, will he not subvert to a great extent all these cogent and holy principles, destroy the most effectual motive in men to live righteously and conscientiously? Then suppose it turns out that

he is mistaken,—suppose the last day reveals to him that his opposition to religion has been a false and wicked proceeding, what will be the horror of the disclosure? He is a man, we will say, who has written scientific treatises, clever articles in opposition to the Christian faith, made some good hits against the clergy. But suppose him to be wrong,—suppose he has been the cause of consigning the souls of hundreds of his fellow-men to eternal ruin,—some perhaps who were near and dear to him, who looked to him for instruction and support. What inconceivable remorse awaits him! Nor is this all, for the influence of a man extends beyond his own generation,—the evil which he has caused will go on perhaps increasing,—will never die. For endless ages he will lament the wilfulness, or the vanity, or the malignity which has made him the instrument of so much evil.

These are terrible thoughts. Surely the possibility of being the instrument of so much evil must, one would think, have some effect in deterring men from so reckless a course, when it is certain that in so doing they are setting themselves against the opinion of the wisest and best men in the civilized world. I would ask the philosophic infidel, to consider whether the great mass of intellectual opinion is not ranged against him. Let him for a moment disembarass him-

self of the influence of his own particular clique, and reflect whether the men of highest intellect are not decidedly opposed to him. Let him advert to the fact that the most eminent men of the age in which he lives are, beyond question, believers in Christianity. Without expressing any opinion on Mr. Gladstone's politics, it is unquestionable that he is a man of the highest intellect. Mr. Gladstone we know has written several works advocating the truth and position of the Christian Church; and has very recently in a speech publicly declared his adherence to the Christian faith, and pointedly blamed the proceedings of those who would subvert it. The present Lord Chancellor has, I believe, published a volume of Christian Hymns. The late Lord Chancellor has for many years of his life taught the little children in a Sunday School. Lord Derby, or his father, I forget which, wrote a book on the LORD'S Parables for his God-child. The late Speaker of the House of Commons set on foot a Commentary on the Holy Scriptures for the express purpose of counteracting the influence of infidels. The Duke of Argyll has written several books on Christian subjects. Which, amongst men of any eminence, can be quoted as taking the opposite view, and publicly assailing Christianity? I cannot call to mind any one of higher character for intellect and

culture than the Duke of Somerset, and even he does not go nearly so far as some of our philosophic sceptics. I do not of course cite either divines on one side, or philosophers on the other, but merely call on the men of highest intellect in the age to decide between them, and I think that a comparison of eminent Christians, who openly maintain the truth of God's Revelation, with those who oppose it, ought at least to abate something from the tone of confidence with which philosophic infidels are wont to assert their views.

Oh! it is a hazardous game which these men are playing, lightly as they may think or speak. The fate of nations, the salvation or ruin of millions of immortal souls is involved in the question of the truth of Christianity. How men of common humanity or common sense should dare to venture on the tremendous responsibility of endeavouring to subvert the faith of the generation in which they live is an insoluble paradox. One would think that a man tainted with infidelity would shrink from contact with his fellow-men, like one infected with the plague, lest he should inadvertently be the means of conveying to others the fatal epidemic.

CHAPTER III.

**AN ATTEMPT AT ESTIMATING THE TRUE VALUE OF SCIENCE
BOTH TO INDIVIDUALS AND TO NATIONS, AS COMPARED
WITH RELIGION.—LET BOTH WORK TOGETHER.**

It seems to be assumed by men of science, if not by others, that science is an unquestionable and undoubted good to the whole human race ; and that every advance in science is to be hailed with the greatest satisfaction. Of course, no one would be so rash as to affirm that it is an evil, but still I think it may be worth while to try and estimate its real value, and to ascertain whether we are making the best use of it. .

We all feel and understand that it is very desirable to know the nature of all the wonderful things which surround us in the present world, and the laws by which the universe is governed. Take, for instance, one of the commonest, at the same time the most stupendous, of the laws of the universe—which strangely, as it almost seems, was not known to men of former generations, but now forms part of every one's store of knowledge—namely, that day and night are caused by the

revolution of the earth round its axis, and not, as would appear to the eye, by the motion of the sun round the earth. One is almost tempted to think that the people who lived in the world under the strange old notion must have been an inferior race to those of recent generations. Philosophers and popular writers are never tired of laughing at the stupid old Pope, who shut up Galileo in the prison of the Inquisition. Some even speak of the story as being, in some way or other, a disgrace to religion. But, desirable as it is to know the truth about the earth turning on its axis, it is obvious, if we think of it, that the knowledge has but little influence on the moral well-being of the human family. There were men as good, as noble, as wise before Copernicus as after—wise I mean in the government of states, or of their families, or of their own spirit. Without for a moment denying the value of even theoretical science, yet it seems undeniable that such knowledge, viewed merely as knowledge, is of comparatively small value as regards man's moral condition.

It would, of course, be better to find out if we could, what is the nature and use of comets; to know more than we do at present about storms, and drought, and the coming seasons—not that we could help ourselves much, or regulate them, if we knew them perfectly; yet it would be a

satisfaction. So it is well to investigate the infinitesimal minuteness of the works of creation. It is a satisfaction to know how many animalcules there are in a drop of ditch water; what is the construction of the foot of a fly, which enables it to walk about on the ceiling—not that we can ever hope to emulate the feat: still it is curious and interesting. It is well to know about protoplasm, and the germs of animal and vegetable life, and the peculiar affections of the heart of a tortoise, or “the regeneration of the eyes of a crab” (subjects recently discussed before the scientific societies of London and Paris), or Mr. Darwin’s recent subject, “The Legitimate and Illegitimate Union between the two kinds of Primrose.” It is well to know the secondary causes of things, and not merely to say that “God hath made them so,” though that, after all, is the true origin of all things. The scientific investigation of these apparently minute matters may lead to further medical discoveries, and enable us to meet the ravages of cholera, diphtheria, &c.

But the advocate of science will of course say, that whatever may be our estimate of the value of science theoretically, there can be no doubt of its immense practical value as regards all the uses of life. This is admitted; we have in the present age a thousand luxuries and conveniences unknown to our forefathers—for which we ought

to be duly thankful. Take only, by way of illustration, the rapidity and convenience of travelling in the present day—this is due to science. Dr. Black discovered the power of latent heat, and the “immortal Watt” applied it to locomotion. Let me suppose Professor —— addressing the ladies and gentlemen of the Brighton meeting, and comparing the old-fashioned mode of travelling with the present. We will suppose a young lady of distinction setting out to pay a visit to her friends in the country about the time when Chaucer wrote his *Canterbury Tales*. She would make her journey on horseback; perhaps, on a pillion behind a serving-man. Then there would be three or four others to carry the luggage, armed with swords and bucklers to defend her against highwaymen. The journey would take three or four days, and the nights must be spent at old inconvenient hostelries. At last, after various perils, she gets to her friend’s house or castle, weary with her long ride, and oh! when she comes to unpack her luggage, only think, of the way in which her best dresses must be all crushed and crumpled after a long journey in old-fashioned mails and saddle-bags. Contrast with this a fair lady’s mode of travelling in the present day. She drives with her man and maid, and three or four well-filled portmanteaus, to Euston Square or Paddington

Station. The servant gets the tickets and tips the porter, who sees the luggage properly labelled and stowed away—and places the lady and her maid by themselves in a convenient carriage. Four or five hours bring her to the station nearest her place of destination. Her friend's carriage is waiting, and a light van for the luggage. On arriving at the house she has a nice talk with her friends before the dressing-bell rings; and when she goes up to her room she finds her toilet arranged, and her dresses laid out as smooth and unruffled as if they were in her own room at Belgravia or Grosvenor Square. I think our Professor might make out an undeniable case of the superiority of modern travelling over that of our forefathers.

But some will say, what you have described is only tip-top civilization—the *crème de la crème*. Well, think only of the luxury which the humblest classes may enjoy—six hours at the sea-side for half-a-crown—a trip to the Crystal Palace—or even a penny steamer. Unquestionably, as regards travelling, the advantage is all on the side of the moderns. I am not quite so sure whether, when the working man gets back after his cheap trip, he finds his home and its accompaniments more comfortable than the homes of the same class were four or five centuries ago. Let this, however, pass for the present.

But I think I hear an objector say, "You do not treat the subject seriously enough. The value of science does not consist only in these mere personal comforts—there are higher and deeper thoughts connected with the vastness of the discoveries of modern science." I quite agree with this statement, and must apologize for having treated the subject rather too lightly. I would rather base my admiration of science on the sentiment of the Psalmist,—“When I consider Thy heavens, even the work of Thy fingers, the moon, and the stars which Thou hast ordained : What is man that Thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that Thou visitest him? . . . O LORD, our Governor, how excellent is Thy Name in all the world.” This is the true spirit in which the man of highest intelligence and piety must view the wonderful works of God. Humility and reverence are the right feelings which should be called forth. And every discovery of science, rightly appreciated, should add to these sentiments. Not only the wonderful discoveries in astronomy—the mechanism of the solar system, and, as far as is ascertained, of the starry firmament—the laws by which the Creator governs the vast universe ; but, almost more forcibly, the minute arrangement of animal and vegetable life—the inconceivable skill with which the sustenance and continuance of organized life is pro-

vided for—the chemical agencies and forces by which, under the government of God, the universe is regulated—every new discovery, the greatest as well as the most minute, ought to fill us with increasing gratitude and admiration for the Great Ruler and Creator of all things.

This is the true use of science. If the contemplation of God's works fills us, as it should, with love and admiration for the Great Creator of all things, and so leads us to devote ourselves to His service, then we shall have derived from science the true benefit which it was calculated to convey. We should ask ourselves, Are *we* better men, better Christians, humbler, purer, holier, more honest, more religious, more likely to go to Heaven?

But *has* this been the case in the recent enlargement of science? has it made men humbler, more religious, more devoted to God? Let us hope it has in some cases; but I fear not in all. I fear that too many minds have been led away from the truth by those very discoveries which should have filled them with wonder and adoration. To what are we to attribute the present flood of impiety and unbelief but, in a great measure, to the abuse of the discoveries which God has enabled us to make in His works. The tracing up of secondary causes has led many to deny the existence of a First Cause: the wonderful regularity

of the operations of nature has had the effect of closing the eyes of too many to the need of a Ruler, and Governor of the universe; the discovery of laws has, strange to say, blinded some to the fact that there must needs be some power to uphold law—that law has no power of operation by itself, without the constant intervention of an executive. The beautiful minuteness of organic life has even been distorted by some, to the monstrous supposition that life is, so to speak, self-creative. Heresies like these have come to be received amongst the more rash and speculative of our philosophers; and I am sorry to say that some, of whom one might have hoped better things, have not come forward with the zeal and promptitude with which they should, to repudiate and disavow the wrong conclusions at which their brother philosophers have arrived.

If then it be asked, are we the better for the recent discoveries of science? it is rather difficult to answer with truth. For if science has led men to deny their GOD and SAVIOUR, despise His Revelation, and has caused the eternal ruin of souls for whom CHRIST died, it would be hard for a Christian not to say that we are the worse rather than the better—that we have turned to our destruction gifts conferred on us for holier uses.

Look at the question in a national point of view. It is true that the most wonderful and

noble discoveries have been made by modern science, and springing from them the most excellent improvement in art. All the beautiful inventions of modern days which adorn our life, all those useful objects which so much distinguish the times in which we live—the steam engine with its multifarious uses, the photograph, the electric telegraph, and a thousand other ingenious inventions depend more or less on science. Very thankful ought we to be to the great God who has given these things for the embellishment of our life. But then again comes the important question, are we better, better men, better Christians, for all these discoveries? Compare the present state of society with those which have gone before—a century ago, two centuries, or say three centuries ago, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Are Englishmen, as a nation, in a better condition than at the time when that Queen summoned her forces to resist the Spanish Armada? Are our statesmen better than those who then ruled the nation; are our upper classes more noble and high-minded—less luxurious, effeminate, self-indulgent; are our merchants more noted for integrity and honour; are our working-men more sober, industrious, honest; our women purer, less vain and frivolous?

It is very difficult to compare one age with another. There is a great deal that is good in the

present state of society, but also a great deal that is very bad.

But how is science involved one way or another in this state of things? I have already shown that science viewed as a theory has in some minds been productive of grievous ill, by shaking the faith of its professors, which enormous evil has a good deal permeated society even to its lowest classes. The press, with its universal agency, conveys the cavils of the atheist down to the lowest grades of life. Consider also the effect on the nation of science as the parent of art—the promoter of all the wonderful discoveries, the conveniences and elegancies of life, which are distributed everywhere, not in England only, but throughout the habitable globe. Yes, think of the influence which science has had on “England’s commercial prosperity!” The promotion of our manufacturing system which is the cause of the conglomeration of our population in overgrown towns, London and its three millions of inhabitants, the crowding together of poor miserable families, the wretched homes, the consequent resort to beer-shops and gin-palaces, the language and discussion held therein, the state of moral feeling engendered, the unions, the strikes, the end of the strikes, and who can tell what that will be? It is true that we have to set against these evils, the fortunes of the millionaires, their luxu-

rious houses, their parks, and wide domains—equal to those of the mediæval aristocrat—their encouragement of art. Nor must we forget to take into our estimation the hundreds and thousands of well-to-do families living in peace and comfort, dependent mainly on our commercial prosperity. But if we set down these more pleasant results mainly to the score of art and science, it would be unfair, and only deceiving ourselves to shut our eyes to the enormous evils of the great towns, with their sweltering population, mainly the creation of the same causes.

The simple truth is, that the value of our arts and science has been much neutralized and spoiled. Science is one of God's greatest gifts to man, but it has been shamefully abused. First it has been abused by its recreant professors to the worst uses of Atheism, whereby the souls of thousands are in danger of being lost for ever. Secondly, it has been in part the source of a state of things, socially and politically, which has been suffered to run out into the most hurtful and dangerous excesses. But there is no real cause for these evils. They do not belong to science itself, but to the abuse of it. A belief in God and in His Fatherly care is not inconsistent with science, but quite the contrary.

True science magnifies the power and wisdom of the great Creator and Father of mankind. Let

but religious men of science consider the reproach which is brought on the profession by the unhappy conduct of a few among them, and let them boldly profess themselves believers in God and His SON JESUS CHRIST, and a better feeling might be kindled. Instead of contributing to the destruction of the souls of men and the ruin of their country, as the infidels of the last century did in France, they might be the means of infusing a new life into our effete society, and doing honour to the Name of God.

I am going to make a very bold assertion—but one that I think can hardly be denied. I would say that in comparison with the work done by a good priest in one parish of England, the whole work of philosophy is as nothing, except so far as it leads men to glorify God. The one relates only to things temporal, the other bears on things eternal. The relative value therefore is as time compared with eternity.

But why make such comparison? The true and righteous course would be to link religion and philosophy together in harmonious action, and employ both for the highest interests of mankind.

Since writing the above I have read the report of the doings of the British Association [for Science] at Bradford. Great interest was ex-

cited by the lecture of Professor Ferrier on the "Localization of the Functions of the Brain." Formerly it was imagined that the brain acted as a whole, that its functions were wholly intellectual, and that it was impossible to assign special functions to special parts. But this notion has been corrected by recent experiments. "Nearly a hundred animals of all classes—fish, frogs, fowls, pigeons, rats, guinea-pigs, rabbits, cats, dogs, and monkeys—have been operated on. The plan was to remove a portion of the skull, and keep the animal in a state of comparative insensibility by chloroform. So little was the operation felt that a monkey, with one side of his skull removed, had been known to awaken out of his state induced by chloroform and proceed to catch flies and eat bread and butter." The mode of proceeding with the animals was to apply the electrode to the external convolution of the brain, which was found to affect the extremities in a remarkable manner. For instance, if the electrode was applied to the right side of the brain the animal would kick out with his left leg, and vice versâ. Other strange phenomena were caused by the operation on the brain. I cannot help fancying, however, that the peculiarity of the left side being affected by the right part of the brain, and vice versâ, is no new discovery. For, if I mistake not, the same phenomenon was explained by Dr. Kidd in his lectures

which I attended at Oxford some fifty years ago. However, I may be mistaken.

“The compliments paid to Dr. Ferrier were many, and a confident hope was generally expressed that we were on the threshold of discoveries which would make an era in our psychological knowledge.” Dr. Crichton Browne “thought that it was a matter of congratulation to many present that experiments of so valuable a character had originated in the West Riding.”

I dare say it may be so. Dr. Ferrier seems to be one of the most intelligent and persevering of his class, and I believe that the particular department which he has undertaken is considered by philosophers to be one of great importance.

The reason of my adverting to the subject is to contrast the work of the philosopher with the work of the priest. The philosopher has gained a great triumph if he has shown in what way the material organization of the brain affects the other parts of the body. The office of the priest is so to affect the spirit of man, through the considerations offered to his mind, as to change his character from sin to holiness—to win him from the power of evil to the love of God. It is the priest's duty to analyze all the feelings and affections of the human heart, and lead immortal beings to heaven and happiness.

It is not my wish to disparage the pursuits of the philosophers; far from it. Rightly conducted in the fear of God they are high and noble. All I wish to show is, that the work of God's minister is as far nobler than that of the philosopher as the immortal spirit of man is superior to the mere perishable molecules which constitute the material substance of the brain.

Note.—The following is from the *Christian Observer* of April, 1823, p. 254.

“M. Flourens has, by a course of experiments on various animals, accumulated a variety of facts in order to ascertain that precise part of the brain in which the impressions made by external objects on the senses centre and produce sensations; and from which other nerves, under the control of the will, conduct irritation to the muscles, and cause them to perform the movements of the body which have been willed,” &c.

CHAPTER IV.

PHILOSOPHERS AND PHILOSOPHERS.—SOME GOOD,
SOME BAD, SOME INDIFFERENT.

WHEN one has occasion to express an unfavourable opinion of certain members of a class or profession, it is not reasonable that one should be accused of condemning the whole class as a body. There are good and bad servants, good and bad lawyers, doctors, priests: so there are good and bad philosophers. If I feel it my duty to reprove a bad servant, it does not follow that I consider servants as a class to be "the greatest plague of life;" if I object to a bad doctor, think him stupid, ill-informed, or it may be over-clever and speculative, disposed to make experiments on his patients, and caring more for some pet theory of his own than for their health and comfort, this is no proof that I have a bad opinion of doctors generally and of medical science. On the contrary, according to the advice of the Preacher, I may "honour the physician with the honour due to him,"¹ and believe that "the LORD hath

¹ Ecclus. xxx. 1.

created him" for the good of mankind. So with regard to philosophers, I may believe that God hath created them for the good of the human family, has given them great and valuable qualities, power of thought and discrimination, and wonderful perseverance; and I may believe that science itself is a noble thing, calculated to raise to the utmost the capabilities of the human mind, and be productive of great benefits to the age in which it flourishes. And yet with all this, I may think that some philosophers have greatly misused their gifts, have not realised the uses for which they were created, have obscured and thrown back real knowledge instead of advancing it, have followed some vain fancy of their own instead of Nature's Great Truth, and consequently have done evil instead of good in their generation. The misfortune is, that if the Clergy or Christians generally express their disapprobation of some of the notions of modern men of science, they are immediately charged with prejudice against science generally, bigotry, intolerance, and so forth, and the everlasting story of Galileo is thrown in their teeth, as if there were any parallel between the persecutors of that ill-treated philosopher and the compliments and adulations which in the present day fall to the lot of the admired and fêted philosopher.

There are philosophers and philosophers, that

is certain. There are some who well deserve all the honour which has been bestowed upon them, men who have enlarged the boundary of human knowledge, opened a way to the investigation of God's works, and deserve well of the generation in which they live. The great Sir Isaac Newton, who of all men, perhaps, made the greatest advance in philosophy, was as his biographer records, "thoroughly persuaded of the truth of Revelation, and amidst the great variety of books which were constantly before him, that which he studied with the greatest application was the Bible. So far from countenancing the atheistical opinions of certain modern philosophers, he declares his belief that "God governs all things, not as the soul of the world, but as LORD over all. . . . He is eternal, infinite, absolutely perfect . . . a living intelligent powerful Being . . . Eternal, Infinite, Omniscient, and Omnipotent." He wrote a book called "Observations on the Prophecies of Daniel and S. John;" and, amongst other things, "he shewed the exact duration of our SAVIOUR's ministry upon earth by a strict demonstration—a difficulty which had mocked the efforts of the best wits before him." Hear this, ye scorers of the present day! Think of the greatest philosopher of the age, rather of any age, devoting his time and his thought to these sacred subjects! Nor have there been wanting good

Christians among the leading philosophers of the present age—nay, let us hope, they are not exceptions—Sedgwick, Faraday, Buckland, and the other writers of the “Bridgewater Treatises,”—all devoted their high talent to the elucidation of the agreement between Science and Revelation. I quite approve of almost every word in the following extract from the address of the Chairman at the late Medical Congress :

“There existed,” he said, “in the minds of all the profession a conviction that science possesses a certain intrinsic value not dependent on its immediate applicability to useful ends. Every day they like other men, were becoming more and more convinced that it was a desirable thing to search after truth by the observation of nature—that those who occupied themselves in this pursuit were substantial benefactors of their country and of the human race. . . . If he were to attempt to illustrate this he should have to turn to other subjects than those which they had before them, he should have to seek for examples among the professors of those sciences which were sufficiently advanced to be brought into practical application. When he thought of a life like Faraday’s, every year of which brought a new accession of knowledge, and, in the end, enriched this country to such a degree as ought to secure him the posthumous adoration of all Mammon-worshippers,

however little they thought of him when alive ; and when he compared the results of Faraday's life with the life itself, with the contracted laboratory in which he laboured, with the mean salary on which he lived, with his quiet devotion to science, with the constancy of his religious faith, and finally with the end of that life—mind and body exhausted in work, how great in such a man did that insatiable spirit of inquiry seem, which found its constant and all-sufficient pleasure in the discovery of new truth—in wresting from Nature her secrets by strenuous intellectual efforts.”

Unhappily there are other men of science who have taken a different course. Instead of promoting that “light and sweetness” which is the characteristic of Christian Truth, they have abused their high talents to the promulgation of darkness and bitterness, casting doubts on all that Christians hold most sacred, and provoking a spirit of acrimony instead of kindness. What is a Christian to do with reference to such persons ? Is he to flatter and compliment them, and applaud their cleverness when they are doing all in their power to frustrate and counteract what he verily believes to be the greatest possible good ? The Christian is persuaded that the eternal welfare of his own soul and the souls of those around him depends on their accepting the salvation which CHRIST has purchased for them : he believes

that the welfare of society, the prosperity of his country, and all that he holds dear, the happiness of the whole human race depends on their living according to the pure and holy law of CHRIST—that if the nation should reject the true worship of God certain ruin would fall upon it. He sees recent evidence of the tremendous evils of infidel principles in the devastation and misery which have so lately afflicted France, when but for a few weeks or months irreligion gained the upper hand; and it was worse, much worse, at the end of the last century. But the philosophical unbeliever seems to care for none of these things. Apparently he has not the slightest concern for the soul of his neighbour—if his neighbour has a soul: and by his rejection of Christianity he casts in his lot with the Communists and Revolutionists, and contributes mainly to the spread of the worst opinions and principles. How can the Christian do otherwise than entertain great suspicion and distrust of such men as these? “What concord hath CHRIST with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?” It is not that unbelievers of the present day are simply unhappy men, much to be pitied, who have missed the way of salvation; but they are actively mischievous, engaged in doing all in their power to lead others away from the path of life.

Again, the Christian is persuaded that the only

way of bringing up the rising generation in good and honest ways is to educate them from their earliest infancy in the true principles of CHRIST. With this object he tells his children as soon as they are able to learn, of the goodness of GOD in making them His sons and inheritors of His kingdom. He teaches them the Articles of the Christian Faith, carefully instructs them in GOD's commandments, teaches them how to pray; and what he believes to be most necessary for the welfare of his own children, he deems it both just and right to communicate to the children of his poorer neighbours. He thinks it would be mean and selfish to bring up his own children in the true doctrines of salvation and take no heed whether the children of his poorer neighbours are taught the truths or not. Hence the vast exertions which the clergy and their friends have made in the past and present generation, while others have made but slight efforts, to build and maintain schools for religious as well as secular education. Hence you see in almost every parish a school connected with the church, in which the children are brought up to fear and worship GOD. And hence the personal exertions which the parish priest makes to instruct the children under his spiritual charge. But the unbeliever, caring for none of these things himself, consistently discourages all endeavours to give religious instruction to the young, and

strange to say, such is the unwholesome complication of political interests, that in spite of the wide-spread opinion that education without religion is of no value—nay, cannot properly be called education at all—the unbeliever has done, and is doing, much to thwart the endeavours of good men to imbue the youthful mind of the nation with the principles of CHRIST's true religion. How can a Christian have sympathy or fellowship with men who promote and act on principles like these—not content to live without God themselves, but perversely doing all they can to frustrate the labours of God's servants to communicate to the poor helpless children of the nation the knowledge of the way of life?

There is one topic comprised in this argument which is so intimately connected with the personal well-being of each individual amongst us, and so important in every way, that I must not attempt to discuss it at the end of a chapter, but must reserve it for one by itself. I mean of course the different views which the believer and the infidel take of the duty and efficacy of prayer.

Meanwhile, considering the intense difference which I have already pointed out between the advocates of the two principles, it seems obvious to me that Christian men and women should not scruple to show a marked discrimination in their estimate of the Christian philosopher who is living

in the faith and fear of God, and is the instrument of exhibiting God's glory in His wonderful works, teaching men to look from Nature up to Nature's God, and those unhappy and misguided persons whose chief delight seems to be to cast doubts on God's Revealed Truth, and lead all with whom they have influence literally to live without God in the world. I wonder that right-minded philosophers themselves do not see the necessity of separating themselves from the false brethren who bring so much discredit on their common profession, besides the incalculable mischief which they are sowing broadcast in the world around.

And in making these observations I utterly disclaim, by anticipation, any charge which may be made against me of having said one word which can be justly taken as derogatory either to science itself or to those good men who pursue it in the fear of God.

CHAPTER V.

EXTRAORDINARY PROPOSAL TO TEST THE EFFICACY OF PRAYER.

IMMENSELY important as science must be allowed to be by those who have entered at all into the subject—nay, even by those who know science only by the many temporal and worldly advantages which have resulted from it, and are continually advancing the civilisation of the world,—much as we must all admire the ability and perseverance of the philosophers of the present age who have added so wonderfully to the fabric of science, yet it would be untrue to deny that there are some black sheep among them, men who have brought discredit to their high profession, and done infinite mischief by setting science in unnatural and unholy opposition to the Eternal Word of God's Revelation. In particular, I adverted in my last letter, to those who have prostituted their talents by disparaging and contradicting those sacred truths by which only, we believe, men can attain happiness either in this world or

in the next : those who oppose themselves to the charitable work of God's servants in their endeavours to train up the rising generation to be good and religious men and women. It is a most grievous thing to see men of ability and perseverance doing all in their power to frustrate what we Christians believe to be the very highest of all temporal or eternal interests. The truth is, as I said before, that philosophers,—some philosophers I mean,—have no notion of the value of souls,—in fact, do not believe that man has a soul to be saved. Their whole system is tainted with this false error.

There is one especial point which must bring this subject home to our hearts and consciences. If there be any doctrine or principle of true religion more intensely practical than another it is the necessity and efficacy of prayer. It is not too much to say that the very object of our creation,—the reason of our being placed upon this earth,—was that we should be worshippers of God. God willed that there should be an intelligent race of beings who should be able to understand and acknowledge His infinite goodness and power, and should render Him a constant and intellectual adoration, should praise Him for His greatness, and look to Him as their FATHER and Preserver, and pray to Him continually for the supply of their temporal and

spiritual necessities. What Christian does not know and acknowledge the value of prayer? Who, when tempted to sin, has not experienced the help and comfort of lifting up his heart to God, and praying for the assistance of the HOLY SPIRIT to aid him in his infirmities? Who that believes in God has not, when in trouble and affliction, besought his Heavenly FATHER to comfort and relieve him, and has not felt his soul revived by the kindly influence of the HOLY SPIRIT of Grace strengthening, comforting, refreshing him? Who has not instinctively besought God for the recovery of a dear child, or wife, or parent, lying on the bed of sickness?

But now there are men calling themselves philosophers who, knowing nothing of these things themselves, endeavour to shake the faith of God's servants in these most holy and consolatory duties; and so would cut them off from the most valuable of all privileges, deprive the afflicted of the sweetest consolation in trouble, rob the sinner of his only hope of being reconciled to God, and obtaining pardon and salvation. What are we to think, what are we to do with regard to men who thus labour with a malicious perseverance to undo the work which the HOLY SPIRIT is accomplishing in the hearts of men, prejudicing poor perishing sinners against the only means open to them of obtaining pardon

and peace? I can only say that unless the work of these men be mere folly and childishness, it is the most gratuitously cruel and hardhearted thing which I ever remember to have been done by civilised men. The whole thing appears to me such a breach of charity, such an exhibition of thoughtless selfishness, as has scarcely been exhibited in recent times.

Consider only the naked case. In the midst of a civilised and Christian community we have suddenly brought before us a proposal to test the value of prayer, by all of us praying during three or four years for the patients in some particular hospital, and not praying for some others, and then seeing in what hospital the greatest number recover! Was there ever so preposterous a notion,—to test the goodness and power of God by the contemptible experiments of human science, as if scientific experiments were the one only source of human knowledge! One can hardly believe that the propounder of this absurd scheme can be in earnest. The next thing one would expect him to do would be to offer to bet a ten pound note on one of the hospitals against the other. The one proposal is not one whit more extravagantly unbecoming than the other. It has surprised me very much that Clergymen of ability, or any others, should take the trouble to reply seriously to this cavil. The “Philosophy of Prayer” for-

sooth! Why, we pray to God simply because God has invited and commanded us so to do. If there is any other duty on which our LORD JESUS CHRIST and His Apostles insist more than another, it is the duty of prayer. "Ask and ye shall have,—seek and ye shall find." "Pray without ceasing." "Men ought always to pray and not to faint." "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." "I will that men pray everywhere,—lifting up holy hands." "Is any one among you afflicted,—let him pray." "The prayer of faith shall save the sick."

"I have no doubt," the objector will say, "that all these texts are to be found in Scripture about the duty and necessity of prayer, but I want some tangible proof that prayer has really been effectual." Well, I can give you plenty of instances,—Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech; When Moses prayed to God the fire was quenched. Many times Moses prayed for the people, and obtained God's mercy. Hannah prayed for a child, and God granted her request. Elisha prayed to God, and He restored the Shunammite's son to life. Elijah prayed for rain, and it rained abundantly. Hezekiah prayed, and the LORD added to his life fifteen years. He prayed again, and God sent His destroying

angel, and cut off the hosts of his enemy. Even when the impious Manasseh prayed, God was entreated of him and spared him. Job, Jeremiah, Jonah, Daniel, all prayed, and obtained their petitions. Monica prayed for her son Augustine, and he became one of the most eminent Fathers of the Church. The following is a recent example, and, I believe, is an instance of what happens continually. A mother had a wayward, obstinate child whom she could not manage. Punishment and coaxing were alike unavailing. At last a pious friend asked her if she ever prayed for the child. She took the hint, and from that time her child began to amend.

“But,” says the objector, “almost all these instances are taken from the Bible; besides it is impossible to tell whether what happened was an answer to prayer, or may have come to pass accidentally. I do not admit the force of these Scriptural examples.” “Do you not?” I answer, “that is unfortunate. We Christians do admit these instances as of undoubted certainty. Why should I give up a line of argument which I consider to be absolutely conclusive? As for your proposed test about the hospitals, pardon me for saying it, I look upon it as absolutely silly,—and if not silly, simply profane.”

The truth is, that the question rests on God’s Revelation. I believe in the duty and efficacy of

prayer, because my GOD and SAVIOUR has commanded and encouraged me to pray. I believe in His authority, on account of the mighty works which He wrought, the holy doctrines which He taught, the prophecies which He fulfilled, and the moral revolution which He has effected. If you admit none of these things, I do not see how there is any common ground to argue on. We have to begin with the question of the truth of the Bible. Being myself satisfied on this point, I believe, without a question, that prayer is the highest duty and privilege of Christians. When you have disproved the authority of the Bible, then will be the time to resort to your philosophical experiments. But until you have done this, it would be mere childishness to argue the point on any other hypothesis. I might as well accept a challenge to a pugilistic contest with my right hand tied behind me.

The difficulty is to imagine what could possibly induce a man, the foremost in his proper work, to travel out of his province and beyond his depth, in setting himself up to discuss the question of prayer,—if indeed there can be any question about it. How could a man whose whole soul is set upon matters of earthly science dare to undertake the tremendous responsibility of unsettling men's minds on the sacred subject of prayer? When a philosopher undertakes to read us an

amusing and interesting lecture about heat or light, it is not necessary that we should inquire what are his religious opinions. But then, on the other hand, men of science ought to keep to their own department. It is much more unbecoming for these men of science to intrude their crude opinions into matters of religion, than for religious men to criticise their views of science. A man may be thoroughly competent to explain the theory of heat to an admiring audience, and yet be lamentably ignorant of the value and efficacy of prayer. To make blunders about science is of temporal interest: to shake the faith of wavering Christians in the efficacy of prayer, and so perhaps be the means of many souls perishing everlastingly, is a fearful responsibility which no right-minded man would venture on.

There is a common fallacy with regard to this subject to which before concluding this chapter I would advert. The scientific sceptic assumes that when a good man prays for rain or sunshine, or any other thing connected with what he calls natural causes, he asks God to alter the course of nature, which he imagines to be impossible. But this is not necessarily the case. We pray that God will do, only on a larger scale, what we do for ourselves every day. If our flower-beds are burnt up by the sun, we use our watering-pots, and give them a refreshing shower; if we

wish to make our grapes or pineapples ripe we place them in a forcing house. What then can be more natural than to pray to God to send us timely rain or sunshine if we fear lest our crops may be injured by the drought or moisture? We do not pray Him to alter Nature's laws in these cases, but to apply them according to His gracious power. Surely it is not superstition to pray to God to do for us on a larger scale what our gardener does every day. Of course God *could* change the laws of Nature, because it was He that gave them, and it is He that upholds them. But we do not ordinarily pray for such things. We do not pray that He would

“ Annihilate both time and space,
And make two lovers happy.”

We do not pray that He will open the windows of heaven and rain loaves of bread for our use. But we pray simply and in faith, as He has commanded us, that He would give us day by day our daily bread.

CHAPTER VI.

A GOOD EARNEST CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHER WANTED.—
DR. CARPENTER.—THE EVOLUTION THEORY.

VERY different from the tone and language of some of our prominent philosophers was the opening Address of Dr. Carpenter at the recent meeting of the British Association at Brighton. Without altogether agreeing with every point in his able Address, yet we must admit that the ethical tone was admirable, and I trust may be taken as the general feeling, not only of the company who heard him, but of the majority of those who cultivate science. "There is a great deal," he said, "of what I cannot but regard as fallacious and misleading philosophy—'opposition of science falsely so called'—abroad in the world at the present time. And I hope to satisfy you, that they who set up *their own conceptions* of the orderly sequence which they discern in the phenomena of nature, as fixed and determined laws, by which those phenomena not only *are* within human experience, but always *have been*, and always *must be*, invariably governed, are really guilty of the

intellectual arrogance they condemn in the systems of the ancients, and place themselves in diametrical antagonism to those real philosophers, by whose comprehensive grasp and penetrating insight that order has been so far disclosed." "To set up laws as self-acting, and as either excluding or rendering unnecessary the power which alone can give them effect, appears to me as arrogant as it is unphilosophical. To speak of *any* law as regulating or governing phenomena is only permissible on the assumption that the law is the expression of the *modus operandi* of the governing power When science, passing beyond its own limits, assumes to take the place of theology, and sets up its own conception of the order of nature as a sufficient account of its laws, it is invading a province of thought to which it has no claim, and not unreasonably provokes the hostility of those who ought to be its best friends." This is true philosophy, and the fact of hearing such sentiments expressed by the President of the British Association might give us a confident hope that the unnatural jealousy between science and theology has passed its culminating point, in the preposterous notion of applying experiment to prayer, and that philosophers and theologians may each take their respective lines without interfering with each other.

After thus expressing my high opinion of the

wisdom and moral excellence of Dr. Carpenter, as exhibited in his opening Address, it may seem strange that I should proceed to impugn any of his opinions. But the truth is, that since the meeting at Brighton, he has thought it right to publish a paper in the *Contemporary Review* which, as it appears to me, goes far to neutralize the good and wholesome effect of his Address. The impression conveyed to my mind by comparing the Address with his paper "On Mind and Will in Nature" is, that his Address did not please some of his scientific friends—in fact, that he has had a good "talking-to" about it—and has been induced to put forth a sort of apology for the doctrine delivered at Brighton. I am very sorry that it should be so. The Address seemed to me admirably suited to bridge over the unnatural antagonism which has grown up between religion and science. The essay, on the other hand, appears to lay down some irreconcilable positions which believers in the Bible cannot in any way accept. I am truly sorry to see this symptom, that scientific men so hang together that they can more readily give up their religion than their science. Still, as Dr. Carpenter writes in a courteous and conciliatory manner, and the worst that can be said of him is, that unconsciously to himself perhaps, he takes the side of science against religion in his endeavours to reconcile the two, it may be

well to accept him as a champion of the philosophy of the day, and discuss our differences in a calm and candid spirit.

The grand difficulty, however, in all such discussion is the question how far scientific men are willing to accept Revealed Truth and Scriptural argument as valid ; or, how far they think themselves authorized in summarily setting aside Scripture, whenever it appears to them to be at variance with science. I cannot say how surprised I was, after reading with so much satisfaction the Brighton Address of Dr. Carpenter, in which he speaks with disapproval of the arrogance of men of science, and blames those who pass beyond their own limits, and allow Science to take the place of Theology, to find him in his essay lecturing theologians, and bidding them consider whether "the conclusions of science are not at least as worthy of their credence as the teachings of certain Ancient Books, which more and more distinctly appear, the more critically they are studied, to be simply the early beliefs of the Hebrew race as to their relations to their Theocratic Head." Dr. Carpenter forgets that those Ancient Books have the sanction of our Divine Master, have been accepted by the Church of all ages, and have been the chief instrument of the civilization of modern days.

The main difficulty in all discussions between

Philosophers and Theologians is, as I said, the question of the authority which is due to Holy Scripture. Philosophers appear to think that when the Bible seems to be opposed to Science, God's Word must at once give way. Theologians would assert just the contrary. Perhaps the true view of the subject is this, that when Science and the Bible appear to disagree, it is a proof that we imperfectly understand one or the other—probably both. Dr. Carpenter in his Essay on "Mind and Will in Nature," advocates the Darwinian theory which is thus stated in his own words: "that the Creator instead of originating each race by a distinct and separate act (the notion commonly entertained) gave to the first created Monad those properties by the continued action of which through countless ages a man would be evolved." This notion he thinks "will come to be viewed as a far grander notion of Creative design, than the idea of special interposition required to remedy the irregular working of a machine imperfectly constructed in the first instance." He makes no exception in the case of man.

I cannot say that I agree with this opinion. Supposing with the Geologists that the earth has in a long succession of ages passed through various forms, that each system of strata has gradually been formed by natural causes, I cannot myself see anything derogatory to the glory of

GOD that He should from time to time, as the earth was fitted for their reception, have created new races of animals suited for the changed condition of the habitable globe. Of course, what was most likely beforehand is a purely speculative question. But to me I confess the creation of a Monad, from which, without further operation or care on the part of the Creator, all the animal race, with its vast variety and size and shape, should be evolved, does not commend itself as at all a probable or grand idea. The improbability of this notion is expressed with telling irony in the following lines of the poet :—

“Some say that in the origin of things,
When all creation started into birth,
The infant elements received a law
From whence they swerve not since : that under force
Of that controlling ordinance they move,
And need not the immediate Hand Who first
Prescribed their course to regulate it now.
Thus dream they, and contrive to save a God
The incumbrance of His own concern, and spare
The great Artificer of all that moves,
The stress of a continual act, the pain
Of unremitted diligence and care,
As too laborious and severe a task.”

To me I confess the most “grand” idea is to contemplate the great Creator as an Almighty and bountiful FATHER continually providing for the wants of His creatures, and ruling all things by

His continual Will. The notion of unintelligent force without will or intellect, a blind necessity, "Creation's eyeless drudge"—so Evolution might be called—working out the marvels of the Universe, appears to me altogether a mean and valueless conception. Science is magnificent! Yes, connected with a Creator, a mighty Will, Infinite Wisdom ruling over a world of sentient and intelligent beings—but as recognizing a mere law and unintelligent force or order it is as comparatively contemptible, as matter compared with spirit. However, in a question like this *a priori* argument is not very forcible. What Dr. Carpenter or what I may think "grandest," or most probable, is of small account. We must look to facts.

Dr. Carpenter thinks that the conclusions which most philosophers are disposed to accept (such as the Palæontological Continuity of Organic Life) ought to be considered by theologians as worthy of their credence. Well,—but by parity of reason, facts and doctrines which all theologians thoroughly believe, (such as the creation of the world and all that is in it, at several epochs, and especially the creation of man in the Image of God,) would equally deserve the credence of philosophers. We must give and take, and I think the theologians have the advantage; for their conclusions rest on the Revealed Word of God,

whereas the dogmas of philosophers are simply the conclusion of their own invention or imagination.

Dr. Carpenter, like most philosophers, has a bad habit of jumping at conclusions. They imagine things in their own minds, and dwell on them and talk about them with their friends, and then assume that they are proved. Professor Huxley declares that he would rather acknowledge his descent from "a good respectable ape" than from savages or evil persons. And Dr. Carpenter adopts the same opinion. "Mr. Edward Fry," he says, "has recently put forth the point in a form in which I entirely concur. Before we cavil at our poor relatives whom Mr. Darwin would put upon us, let us consider for a moment what relatives we are bound to acknowledge. We *cannot deny* our descent from savages, from barbarians of brutal lives with such relatives admitted, any great fastidiousness as to our genealogy seems out of place." It is rather a good joke about the "respectable ape," but nothing more than a joke. Any one will see that Dr. Carpenter's argument is mere assumption. Who admits that we are descended from savages? On the contrary, Dr. Carpenter must surely be aware that even his co-philosophers do not agree with him on this point. The Christian believes that God created man "in His own image"—that the

first father of our race was highly endowed—that our second ancestor, Noah, was a man probably of high culture, “a preacher of righteousness,” a man acquainted with all the civilization of many previous ages. We believe that there has always been a line of civilized men, and that the savages are those who by their evil habits, or wilful departure from the truth taught them by God, have degraded themselves from the image of God in which they were created. It is marvellous to me how a man like Dr. Carpenter can coolly take it for granted that the present nations of the earth are all descended from savages, when he must be aware that it is a point in which the large majority of educated men entirely differ from him.

The Evolution theory, in its full extravagance, as set forth by Mr. Darwin and accepted by Dr. Carpenter, is quite destitute of any substantial proof—it is contrary to reason, contrary to all probability, contrary to Scripture, contrary to the testimony of the Church, not built on any induction, but contrary to the phenomena of geology; in truth, it has no one proof or evidence whatever to rest on, but is simply the offspring of a diseased imagination, dwelling continually on an unwarranted hypothesis. That it may not be supposed that this is the opinion only of a priest who knows little or nothing of the matter, I will quote a passage from the pages of one who stands high

among philosophers themselves. Would there were many such! "Straining after the impossible," he says, "we have entered into an age of speculative philosophy, which bids fair to destroy all that is high and noble in our conceptions of nature, and to lead us into the cold unimpassioned region of scepticism. To mock all sense of the beautiful with the derisive laugh of materialism—to check the aspiration of refined mental culture by the assumption of theories which are revolting to our better nature—to destroy upon unsound grounds the faith which every man of nobility of intellect has, and always will have, in the ever present mind, and thought, and hand of the Creator in Creation—to replace a final cause with a self-acting secondary law—to substitute chance for design, and to patch up a destroyed faith by attempting to reconcile truth and falsehood—when things have come to such a pass as this, the strongest mind might tremble for the fate of science itself, were it not confident in the ultimate triumphs of the true."¹ No wonder, that, as one of the speakers at the Leeds Congress informed the meeting, "the Academy of Science at Paris refused to admit Mr. Darwin as a corresponding member of its body, on the ground that

¹ An Exposition of the Fallacies in the Hypothesis of Mr. Darwin. By C. R. BREE, M.D., F.Z.S., Senior Physician to the Essex and Colchester Hospital, &c., p. 328.

his work on the *Origin of Species* was thoroughly unscientific, and was not based upon sound argument, but upon received assumption."

Besides being unscientific, the Evolution theory is altogether irreligious and contrary to God's revealed Word. It excludes all miracles, and so annuls at once the Old and New Testament. It does away with the value of prayer. It deprives poor sinful, suffering man of the consolation and hope of calling on God for relief in his necessities. It destroys in fact the essence of religion. The essence of religion is to love God. But it is impossible to love a mere law or order, an impersonal abstraction or "stream of tendency." The idea is nonsensical. Lastly, it makes the life of this present world to be all in all. It denies the miracle of the Resurrection, and the hope of the world to come. The cruel tyrant who has ruled with iron sway, and rendered miserable the lives of thousands, the murderer, the adulterer, the corrupter of female innocence, the selfish Sybarite, will, according to this heartless creed, suffer no retribution in the world to come. The poor and honest man, who has endured much injustice in this world, the thousands and tens of thousands of toiling and suffering men who have passed their days in laborious drudgery, toiling in mines during a long and painful life, labouring in furnaces and other unwholesome occupations—and have borne

their hard lot in patience and hope, will die and be no more—instead of being, as the Christian hopes and believes, raised by the power of God to the realms of bliss, there to live in joy unspeakable for eternal ages. All that God has given them, according to the Darwinian creed, is a life of toil and suffering here, and at the end—annihilation!

May God forgive the philosophers who have promulgated these heartless dogmas, and give them grace to recant their dreary superstition!

It may perhaps need some apology that I should take upon myself to analyze the intellectual workings of a very respectable and highly gifted gentleman. Dr. Carpenter is a representative man, and stands high in the estimation of the scientific world, and is fond, like many others, of publishing his opinions to the world. I venture therefore to express an opinion on a point of very great importance both to men of science and to others, as to the way in which the former suffer themselves to be deceived much to their own disadvantage, how without intending to sacrifice religious truth they do nevertheless imperceptibly lose their hold on it by incautious admissions and by quite unnecessary sacrifice of points on which the truth depends. If we admit the being of a God, it is surely not more philosophical to suppose that He created a monad and gave to it

“those properties by the continual operation of which, through countless ages, a man was evolved,” than that He created different races of animals at the time when the earth was prepared to receive them. Philosophically and scientifically it seems to me to make no difference whatever. But religiously it makes all the difference in the world. The former supposition takes away from the Creator all care over His own works, and consequently precludes the necessity of worship and obedience; for why should creatures pay homage to a Being whose sole connection with them was that in ages past He created the germ of life? The admission of this strange notion of an aboriginal speck or monad seems to be a gratuitous rejection of religious truth, without the slightest gain to philosophy. Yet into this snare has a man with Dr. Carpenter’s general good principle fallen. He has given way to a false feeling of deference to the very men whom he has before denounced as “arrogant.” It is but the case, I fear, with too many others. They are led to admit the possibility of some seductive theory without considering that it costs them their religious faith. They play into the hands of the sceptic and unbeliever, and so throw their influence into the balance not in favour of philosophy, for to philosophy it matters nothing, but simply against the truth.

Men of science, it seems to me, have formed

themselves too much into a clique. In the eager pursuit of their favourite object and in the constant intercourse with men of their class, they become so imbued with the mode of thinking, and prejudices, and false assumptions of those with whom they are brought into contact, that they incautiously give up vital points, or accept theories, which in regard to philosophy, are not in the least essential, but only assumed by the more rash spirits among them; but the giving up or acceptance of which is in reality a sacrifice of Revealed Truth. Without meaning harm they make such concessions to the Pantheist and the Ultra-Evolutionist as, if true, would drive the Creator from His own Creation and make a God out of the mere order of Nature.

If it were only philosophers who fell into this error or inconsistency I should not, perhaps, have thought it necessary to say so much as I have done about it—not for want of the desire, if it might be, to help them in their dire struggle with the enemy of souls, but simply from diffidence as to my power to influence them. But the same unhappy principle, or rather want of principle, has permeated other classes of society. Even amongst the clergy there are those who have unconsciously fallen into the same error. Unfortunately science has attained a sort of temporary fashion; its magnificent discoveries have capti-

vated the present generation ; its valuable inventions in art, the conveniences and luxuries which the present age derives from its labours, all these have so impressed the minds of unthinking and even thoughtful men, that they have suffered themselves to be blinded to the dangers which lurk beneath the surface. They have failed to perceive that together with the splendid theories and practical wonders of science, Satan, with his usual skill, has contrived to sow the seeds of evil, to insinuate scepticism and the pride of intellect. What the Christian must aim at is to separate the chaff from the wheat, and learn to discriminate between true and false philosophy ; and instead of fancying that he finds in science disproof of an over-ruling Providence, to discover rather increased evidence of the Power, the Wisdom, and Goodness of the great Creator and Ruler of the Universe.

P.S.—Dr. Carpenter, I believe, alludes to a paper of mine in the following passage, printed in the *Contemporary Review* for April, 1873, p. 787 :

“Of the prejudice existing in a certain section of the public mind on these subjects, a very curious example is afforded by the fact that I have lately seen my Paper in this Review, on ‘Mind and Will in Nature,’ publicly characterized as atheistical, on account of its acceptance of the

Evolution doctrine: the writer expressing great regret that it had entirely destroyed the hopes which my Brighton Address had led him to form."

It certainly does appear to me that the passages in this chapter quoted from Dr. Carpenter's Brighton Address are totally irreconcilable with other passages in the *Contemporary Review* in which he seems to advocate the extremest views of the Evolutionists. How he can reconcile them I am at a loss to discern.

As to what is atheistic and what is not, Philosophers it seems differ from Divines. But to teach that "God created a Monad and gave it those properties by the continued operation of which, through countless ages, a man was evolved," when God has distinctly told us that on the sixth day, or age, "God created man in His own image," I confess appears to me very much like Atheism. The Christian's God is an Almighty Intelligent Spirit, Who created the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and not only created them, but rules over them continually, controlling the wills and affections of sinful men, pledged by His sacred Word to punish unrepentant sinners, and to reward with eternal life those who believe in Him and diligently seek Him. To deny this God is in my judgment Atheism.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.—SIR J. LUBBOCK.

It appears to me that many worthy men, who are philosophers, fall, without suspecting, it into grievous heterodoxy from the unwary following the opinions of men not nearly so worthy of credit as themselves. Thus Sir John Lubbock, who writes almost invariably in a just and temperate spirit, is liable to serious objection when he follows the commonplace but unwarranted dogmas of his brother philosophers. In his interesting book on "The Origin of Civilization, and Primitive Condition of Man," after describing the condition of man in his savage state, and relating the strange superstitions, and gross practices into which he has fallen, he proceeds, "Nay, in the absence of education, not even Christianity prevents mankind from falling into these errors. . . . A belief in witchcraft was all but universal until lately in our own country. This dark superstition has indeed flourished for centuries in Christian countries, and has only been ex-

pelled at length by the light of science." I am not disposed to deny that science may have had its effect in dispelling the belief in witchcraft, though, unless Sir John Lubbock be a believer in spirit-rapping, he must admit that a belief scarcely less unscientific has sprung up in its place. But it is the following passage to which I chiefly desire to draw attention, "The immense service which science has thus rendered to the cause of religion, and of humanity, has not hitherto received the recognition which it deserves. Science is still regarded by many excellent but narrow-minded persons as hostile to religious truth, while in fact she is only opposed to religious error. No doubt her influence has always been exercised in opposition to those who present contradictory assertions under the excuse of mystery, and to all but the highest conceptions of Divine power. The time however is approaching when it will be generally perceived that so far from science being opposed to religion, true religion without science is impossible; and if we consider the various aspects of Christianity as understood by different nations, we can hardly fail to perceive that the dignity, and therefore the truth of their religious belief is in direct relation to the knowledge of science and of the great physical laws by which our universe is governed."—P. 256.

These are evidently the words of an earnest

man, who in his love for science yet does not intend to forsake his religion.

But there is a manifest fallacy in the whole argument which I think the writer himself will be disposed to admit when pointed out to him. It is of course undeniably true that true science and true religion must be harmonious with each other,—and that is one chief point which I am desirous of establishing. But then there is a “philosophy falsely so called.” There are philosophers and philosophers. I do not think that Sir J. Lubbock gives due weight to this undeniable truth. Again, science is tentative and ever advancing: what is held by many to-day, may be disproved or greatly modified to-morrow. The philosophers of the next century will, we may feel sure, have advanced far beyond those of the present generation. Therefore although we may “admit that true science may be a great aid to religion,” yet it seems obvious that there may be much in the present opinions of men of science which may be found to be antagonistic to true religion.

Let us briefly consider some of these points.

From the general tone of Sir J. Lubbock's writings, I think I might venture to infer that he is not a man who denies the value of what Christians believe to be not only the first of duties, but the most efficacious of all means of spiritual advancement, without which no man could for a

moment be considered a Christian or religious man. I need scarcely say that I advert to prayer. Now it is notorious that some of the most advanced men of science of the present day doubt, or even deny the value of prayer. It is an evasion of the question to say that they only doubt the value of prayer for rain or fair weather, or even for relief from sickness. They deny the use of prayer altogether. In truth, they deny that there is any personal God Who listens to prayer. Will Sir J. Lubbock venture to say that this is an instance of the "immense service which science has rendered to the cause of religion and humanity," and in which, "so far from science being opposed to religion, true religion without science is impossible?" It may be true that science has helped to discourage the belief in witchcraft, but if with witchcraft it has made men doubtful as to the value of prayer, surely Sir J. Lubbock would not consider that we have gained an advantage. He must admit that this is a great drawback to the value of science. Why then does he not take pains to discriminate, and not give the benefit of his unqualified approval to the value of this so-called science of the day?

Again, there can be no doubt that the prevailing atheism and infidelity is due to the rash speculations and crude assertions of some men of science. Of course I do not include all in this

sweeping assertion. In truth, I believe there are very few who would avow themselves atheists. They salve their conscience by the notion that if only they admit the existence of a First Cause, it is not atheism to deny His governance of the world and the care of His creatures. They deny the existence of GOD as a Father, or Ruler of the universe; and hence arises the depreciation of the value of prayer. Their notion is that there is some settled order of things which goes on without the intervention of a Higher Power, though they do not deny that there may possibly have been some Higher Power which first set all things in motion—some Unknowable First Cause. Surely Sir J. Lubbock must perceive that this is a mere fallacy, or at least that it is using terms in a different sense from what they have always hitherto been used. What Christians mean by GOD, nay, what men of any religion mean by GOD, is a mighty Unseen Spirit Who guides and governs all things by His power and wisdom. Can Sir J. Lubbock really think that in the denial of a GOD, as hitherto believed in by mankind we have an instance of “the immense service which science has rendered to the cause of religion and humanity?” Surely then he ought to have qualified his assertion, that “true religion without science is impossible,” seeing that the science of the present day, at least in the hands of some

of its professors, sets itself directly against this very belief in a God, depriving suffering man of the hope and comfort of believing himself under the protection of a wise and beneficent Father Who is a Rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

Take again the denial of miracles, which is another instance of the influence of the so-called science of the present day, so far as it has spread itself amongst the people. Does not he perceive that to deny the possibility of miracles does, at one stroke, cut us off at once from all belief in the Bible, which is simply an inspired narrative of God's miraculous intervention in the affairs of the world? Does he really mean to destroy the faith of all Christian people? Does he intend that science should supersede the religion of the best and most enlightened of mankind, no less than the hope and comfort of the poor and afflicted—deprive them of the hope of a reward hereafter, and of the check which religion imposes on the evil deeds of men? Judging from the general tone of Sir J. Lubbock's writings, I should not have said that this was his intention. He seems to speak as Christians generally speak of the superstition and cruelties of heathen nations and of the great superiority of the Christian religion. He cannot then deliberately intend to advocate the advance of that sort of science which

denies a God or a Providence, and scoffs at the notion of a "Good FATHER Who listens to the prayers of His people."

Again he says, "Fully satisfied that religion and science cannot in reality be at variance, I have striven in the present publication ('Pre-historic Times,') to follow out the rule laid down by the Bishop of London, in his excellent lecture delivered last year at Edinburgh. The man of science, says Dr. Tait, ought to go on 'honestly, patiently, diffidently, observing and storing up his observations, and carrying his reasonings unflinchingly to their legitimate conclusions, convinced that it would be treason to the majesty of science and of religion if he sought to help either by swerving ever so little from the straight line of truth.'" Ah! it were well if all men of science did thus act "honestly and diffidently."

It is a great misfortune that philosophers, who are really good men at heart, should be so mixed up with the speculation of atheists and unbelievers, as to seem not to dare to raise their voice against them, and vindicate the true value of science as a gift which a wise and merciful God has bestowed on men, not to supersede but to aid and confirm the revelation of His Word. For in truth there is no sort of real antagonism between them. It is simply an unprovoked attack on religion which some men make in the supposed

interests of science. Viewing the matter simply from a philosophical point of view, how does it logically differ whether, as they suppose, things go on of themselves in a settled order, or whether God has established a law which cannot be broken—a law which He Himself upholds and maintains? The exceptional occasions on which for His own wise purposes He interferes in the regular operation of that law do not in any perceptible degree affect the discoveries of science.

Could not some society be formed with Sir J. Lubbock and Dr. Carpenter at the head, consisting of philosophers determined to uphold the Christian religion, and set themselves against the aggressions of the infidels?

CHAPTER VIII.

ANTHROPOMORPHISM AND PANTHEISM.—MR. MATTHEW
ARNOLD.

THERE is a remarkable passage at the end of Dr. Carpenter's recent paper in the *Contemporary Review*, on "Mind and Will in Nature," in which a contrast is drawn between Pantheism and Anthropomorphism. Anthropomorphism is the attributing to God the passions and feelings, and even form of man. Pantheism is the denial of a Personal God, or as Dr. Carpenter represents it, "the absence of any distinct recognition of that conscious volitional agency which is the essential attribute of personality, without which the universe is nothing else than a great self-acting machine." The truth, as Dr. Carpenter says, lies between these extreme opinions. The question with him is as to the point at which the truth is placed. This is an important matter in the controversy between science and theology, and demands close attention.

Men are led into the error of Pantheism by

fixing their attention too exclusively on the laws and forces of nature, so as to think of the Divine Being as the mere first principle of the universe, and His agency throughout the world as, not the direction or government, or interference in the concerns of the creatures which exist, but a sort of fatal necessity, whereby all things go on from age to age in a regular sequence without the need of the controlling intervention of an over-ruling Providence. Anthropomorphism, in Dr. Carpenter's view, is the reverse of this. It may be best illustrated by examples; but, in truth, Anthropomorphism rightly viewed is really a mere figure of speech. It is only when what are mere figures are supposed to be realities that Anthropomorphism is liable to censure.

There are countless passages in Holy Scripture in which by a figure of speech the action of man is attributed to the Deity. GOD is said to have delivered the Israelites from the house of their bondage "by a mighty hand and outstretched arm." But no one surely could suppose that this was anything but figurative and poetical language. It is probably on account of the irreverence of supposing that GOD can be represented by any outward form that the ancient Church, like our own, refrained from making any representation of the Eternal FATHER, which must needs be derogatory to His dignity. But in word-painting

there is not the same need of reticence. God is often spoken of in language at once the most sublime and the most hyperbolical. No other language equals the Hebrew in the astonishing sublimity of its conception of the Deity, "He rode upon the cherubims and did fly, He came flying upon the wings of the wind." "Thou deckest Thyself with light as with a garment, and spreadest out the heavens like a curtain. Who layeth the beams of His chambers in the waters, and maketh the clouds His chariot, and walketh upon the wings of the wind." Now, if any persons reading these passages in the Bible supposed that they were to be taken in their exact literal interpretation, of course that would be very bad theology. They are simply passages of the most astonishing magnificence, to be understood as poetical imagery. I question whether Homer, or Pindar, or any other poet has passages of equal grandeur.

But besides these representations of God with visible form and attributes, there are also a great many passages in which He is described as endowed with human feelings and passions, which are to be taken in an Anthropomorphic sense as much as those which represent Him in human or visible form. Thus when it is said that in consequence of the wickedness of man before the flood, "it repented the LORD that He had made

man upon earth, and it grieved Him at the heart," or again, when the LORD said, "Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their cry is very grievous, I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto Me, and if not, I will know." So, when God is called a jealous God, and said to be filled with fierce anger. It is difficult to know precisely where to draw the line between the figure of speech which we call Anthropomorphism, and what is reality. For there is no doubt that God did sometimes appear in bodily form, and that many times His Voice was heard. But in truth, in most of these cases, it is not of essential importance whether the passage is to be considered figurative or not—because the figure, if it be a figure, is used for the purpose of giving the clearest impression of the truth. I scarcely think that in these days any great error or superstition can arise even from exaggerated Anthropomorphism. No person except the most ignorant could take in their literal sense these figures of speech which are used to illustrate the relation in which we stand to God, and God to us. Certainly no intelligent English Churchman could fall into the error, for the first of the Thirty-nine Articles begins—"There is but one living and true God, without body, parts, or passions, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness :

the Maker and Preserver of all things, both visible and invisible."

No, the danger is altogether on the other side. Scientific sceptics have brought themselves so to contemplate God as a mere impersonal force that they would explain away all the literal truth of our religion and bring in a mere scientific atheism. It is remarkable that in the very next paper to that of Dr. Carpenter in the *Contemporary Review* which we have been considering, there is an article that bears on the subject of Anthropomorphism. It is signed "The Author of 'Hints towards a serious attempt to estimate the value of the Prayer for the Sick'"—and is dated from the Athenæum Club, Sept. 1872. Who is the gentleman? Let him explain himself. "I am a physiologist, say, belonging to a section of the 'narrow' physicists—or a geologist. I am engaged in a search after the manner and nature of work exercised by some great power infinitely beyond me. What wonder and admiration overwhelm me, as I trace the operation of a Supreme Intelligence. I may or may not anthropomorphise that Power, and call Him 'Creator,' 'Deity,' 'Father,' what you will." We are not concerned to follow out the argument of this "narrow physicist," as he ironically calls himself, but merely to ascertain what is his view, and that of his brethren, of Anthropomorphism. One meaning of

Anthropomorphism is, in his view, to call God "Creator," "Father." I am glad that this illustration has occurred, because it shows, beyond a question, what is the real meaning of these philosophers. It is simply the eradication of the principle of all religion from the soul of man. No wonder that this writer should doubt the value of prayer, when he has ceased to regard God as his *Creator* or his *Father*. The very principle of all religion is to believe that we are placed in the world by an Almighty and All-wise Creator, who preserves the creatures which He has made, and loves them as a father loves his children, and desires nothing so much as their happiness, and watches over them with a Father's care. All this we are told is Anthropomorphism, an extreme view to be avoided as much as Pantheism!

But the truth is, Dr. Carpenter has made a mistake in classing Pantheism and Anthropomorphism together as forms of religion, or no religion. Pantheism indeed is a deadly heresy—virtually the denial of the existence of God—but Anthropomorphism is merely a figure of speech. It does not follow that it is a religion because it ends in "ism." It is a word like sophism, truism, solecism, vulgarism, and merely designates a mode of speaking of the Almighty in terms intelligible to the human mind. This is its real meaning. But when it is diverted from its true meaning, and

understood as being the same as calling God our Creator or our Father, when such language and belief as this is repudiated under the name of Anthropomorphism, it is simply to repudiate the highest and holiest truths of religion.

Mr. Matthew Arnold in his recent book called "Literature and Dogma, an Essay towards the better understanding of the Bible," laments the wide-spread infidelity which pervades the working classes. "An inevitable revolution," he says, "of which we all recognise the beginnings and signs, but which has already spread perhaps farther than most of us think, is befalling the religion in which we have been brought up." I am not sure of this. We may hope in the first place that the present infidelity *appears* more conspicuously in the present age, because men have ceased to be ashamed of being infidels. There is always I fear a vast latent mass of infidelity. But now men are so bold as to avow it. Hitherto the truth has always revived. God grant it may do so again. In the last century Voltaire spread his noxious opinions through France, Tom Paine corrupted the uneducated classes of this country, Hume spread his cold scepticism amongst men of letters. Nor was there wanting a Darwin to tell us that we were all descended from apes. Yet all this passed away before the revival of religion, first under the form of Evangelicalism,

in which respect to the Holy Scriptures was conspicuous. Let us trust that the recently roused energy of the Church may prove more than sufficient to meet the present assaults of sceptics and Latitudinarians.

Mr. Matthew Arnold suggests another method. "To re-inthronize the Bible as explained by our current theology, whether learned or popular, is absolutely and for ever impossible, [he thinks,] as impossible as to restore the predominance of the feudal system, or the belief in witches." No, he has hit upon a better plan,—he proposes to to explain the Bible upon an entirely new system. And what do my readers suppose is his method? Simply to leave out the character of God! "The word God," he says, "is by no means a term of science, of exact knowledge, but a term of poetry and eloquence, a literary term in short," (p. 12.) "For science," he says, "God is simply the stream of tendency by which all things fulfil the law of their being," (p. 41.) He scoffs at the idea that "God is a Personal First Cause, Who thinks and loves,—the moral and intelligent Author and Governor of the universe." Now there are many infidels in the present day, many of the character described by the Psalmist, who say in their heart, "There is no God." But the peculiarity of Mr. Matthew Arnold is that he admits the inspiration of Holy Scripture, and

yet denies the existence of a "First Cause, the Author and Governor of the universe." He admires the Bible very much, the first words of which are, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," yet he altogether denies the notion of God being our Creator, Father, and Ruler.

And the way in which he would restore the Bible to the love and respect of the people is by substituting for the notion that God is our Creator and Father, which He considers anthropomorphic, the belief that God is "the enduring power, not ourselves, that maketh for righteousness," (57 et passim,) Mr. Arnold insists very strongly on this point. It is in fact the key-stone of his edifice. Once get out of people's heads the notion that the Bible teaches them that God is their Maker, or Father, or Preserver, and substitute for these errors the belief that all the Bible teaches us in this matter is the self-evident truth that "the Eternal is an enduring power, not ourselves, that maketh for righteousness," and the case will be quite altered; the people will believe the Bible again, and follow after righteousness, at least much more than they do at present.

And this is nineteenth century philosophy !

CHAPTER IX.

THE USE OF EVIDENCES.—POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE.—DR.
PUSEY.—ARCHBISHOP WHATELY.—PERE LACORDAIRE.

THERE is a strange fallacy current among sceptics, that because some people profess one religion and some another, no one has a right to say that his religion is the best. "Whether you be a Christian, a Moslem, a Hindoo, a Buddhist, a Parsee, or a Fetish-worshipper," you are equally debarred from assuming that your religion is better than that of others.

Now this is contrary to the practice of men in every other department of knowledge or practice. There can be but one nearest road from one place to another; all others must be wrong, or at least roundabout. In casting up a sum only one total can be right. Suppose several persons want to know the exact time, they all take out their watches and find them different, yet only one can be correct. One person perhaps says "I am sure mine must be right, for I set it this morning at the station." The others having no such evidence to show probably acquiesce. I admit that

in respect to different Churches, or different schools of opinion in the Church, there is some truth in this theory. All professing Christians believe that the Word of God is contained in Holy Scripture, and accept the Creeds as the summary of their faith; but some schools in the Church dwell more on one aspect of the Truth than others, and so, to a certain extent, all may be true, at least partially. But when you speak of entirely different religions,—Christian, Buddhist, Fetish-worship,—it is clear that only one can be true, the rest must needs be false. A story is told of the bronze statue of S. Peter, at Rome, which is an object of great reverence to pilgrims and others, but is said by some to have been originally a statue of Jupiter. A young Englishman, rather profanely it must be confessed, knelt down and kissed the foot of the image, saying, “O, good Jupiter, if your turn ever comes round again remember me, I pray you, that I did not, like others, neglect you in your misfortunes.” This is on the principle of scepticism. Who knows whether Jupiter and Juno, or Thor and Wodin, or Vishnu and Siva may not be the true deities after all? How can we Christians believe that we are right and everybody else wrong?

In the first place, Christian nations are the most advanced and enlightened people in the world. We do not pay this mock deference to

other people in other matters. We feel and know that in civilization we are the superior. We do not for a moment suppose that the Fetish-worshippers of the Fiji Islands are equal to us in other things. Why should we imagine it possible that their Fetish-worshipping should be possibly as good as Christianity?

But the fact is, that no other religion in the world has any evidence to show for its truth. No evidence whatever could be brought forward by the worshippers of Zeus and Here that there ever were such gods or people at all. Socrates said jocosely, that he supposed that people must know who were their ancestors, alluding to those who supposed themselves to be descended from the gods. No other proof could be given. But in the case of Christianity, we know that there is an immense body of evidence which has been thoroughly sifted and accepted by the ablest and most intellectual men. Nothing of the sort can be alleged with regard to other religions.

Now I do not mean to say that it is necessary for all persons to go through this process of searching into evidence. Thousands there are who are quite incompetent to weigh the evidences of Christianity. Multitudes have been baptized into CHRIST's Church, and never entertained a doubt of the truth of their religion. The cavils of sceptics appear to them to have no weight. Still

it is important in these days, to be able to give a reason for the faith that is in us. We are living in critical times, not unlike the middle of the last century. My hope and belief is, that the influence of pseudo-Philosophy has done its worst—that the Darwin bubble, especially the ape hypothesis, will soon explode, as the similar fancy of Lord Monboddo and the elder Darwin did in the last century. Educated persons are, I trust, beginning to discern that this style of attack on religion is simply the going back to follies which have long since been refuted; in fact, they are but the resuscitation of Pagan Philosophy.

Meanwhile, it behoves all those to whom Truth is dear to bestir themselves vigorously in bearing testimony against the cavils and delusions which are abroad. For, though we may entertain no doubt that Truth will in the end prevail, yet it is to be feared that many individuals may be led astray and ruined. It is important, therefore, that each person should be able, if exposed to attacks, as almost every one is more or less, to have at hand convincing answers to the cavils which abound. I do not propose in this, or any following paper, to supply a regular treatise on Evidence,¹ but rather advert to some of the most prominent cavils which present themselves in the present day.

¹ I have endeavoured to do this in some degree at least in a work recently published and placed on the list of the S.P.C.K., called "Thoughts on the Bible."

And first I wish to point out a mistake which is not unfrequently made by some very good men. All Christians, I suppose, have their peculiar ground of belief—their own special reasons or influences which have satisfied their own minds. What I think is unwise, is that very able writers, arguing with convincing eloquence on some particular branch of evidence, are too apt to disparage other lines of argument which have appeared to other minds as convincing as their own favourite thoughts have to themselves. This is ill-advised, because these writers are mutually refuting each other. One man, for instance, shall dwell mainly on the miracles of our LORD, or the prophecies as evidences of His mission. Another shall rest his faith on the testimony of the Church, and shall speak disparagingly of miracles. Another shall dwell exclusively on the testimony of his own conscience and feelings as to the efficacy of faith in CHRIST. He forgets that this testimony is available only to one who is already living in the faith and fear of GOD. Books of evidence, such as Butler's Analogy and Paley's three Treatises on Natural Theology, the Evidences, and the Horæ Paulinæ are mainly intended to influence the minds of those who do *not* believe. They are calculated to remove, if GOD will, and through the operation of the Spirit, the causes of their unbelief. It is most true that the truths of Christianity cannot be demonstrated into people's minds without the aid of the HOLY SPIRIT, but still the arguments

used may be the means by which the HOLY SPIRIT shall work for the salvation of souls. And besides affording matter of conviction to unbelievers and doubters, the consideration of the Evidences of Religion is eminently fitted for filling the minds of believers with gratitude and devotion. What can be more grateful to the mind of a Christian philosopher than the proof of God's wisdom and goodness summed up in Paley's Natural Theology, which might be indefinitely increased by the marvels of creation which science has unfolded since his time? Or take the divine character of our LORD, or His doctrine, or the progress of His kingdom; or take Dr. Pusey's book on the Prophet Daniel, or the convincing force of Prophecy as set forth in his recent Sermons headed "Prophecy, a Series of Miracles which we can examine for ourselves," "the Prophecy of CHRIST our Intercessor and Atoner in Isaiah liii.," and "CHRIST the Light of the world, to be rejected by His own, to be despised, and so to reign in glory." These various writings not only tend to remove, through God's grace, the difficulties from the minds of imperfect believers, but also build up in the hearts of believers increased feelings of love and faith. One form of evidence is more suited to one mind, and one to another. And hence it would be a mistake to disparage any one form of evidence because we ourselves have been struck chiefly by another.

The same mistake is made by commentators, who in their zeal and eagerness to establish some interpretation or explanation of their own discovery, are wont to speak almost contemptuously of the interpretation adopted by others; so that the effect on the mind of the reader, if he happen not to see the force of the new interpretation, would be simply to shake his faith in any explanation.

If we take, as we surely ought, the mode of proceeding adopted by our LORD Himself and His Apostles, we shall dwell with reverence and confidence on all the various evidences of His Divine mission. And it is the very combination of diverse evidence which renders its truth so irresistible. Take, for instance, the address of S. Peter to the Jews from various nations gathered together on the Feast of Pentecost, "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: JESUS of Nazareth, a Man approved of God among you by *miracles, wonders, and signs*, which God did by Him in the midst of you." Here he appeals first to the evidence of miracles which the fellow-countrymen of JESUS could not deny that He had wrought amongst them, and which we, too, have received from the testimony of eye-witnesses. So afterwards, in addressing the household of Cornelius, he declares "How God anointed JESUS of Nazareth with the HOLY GHOST and with power; Who went about doing good and healing all that were

oppressed of the devil: for GOD was with Him." S. Paul also, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, says that GOD bore them witness "both by signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the HOLY GHOST." This evidence of miracles is continually referred to in Holy Scripture. I am at a loss, therefore, to understand why any one should scruple to use this argument in the case of those whose faith is doubtful. The miracles were wrought expressly for the more confirmation of the faith.

Having appealed to the mighty deeds and miracles of JESUS of Nazareth, S. Peter goes on in his Pentecostal address to refer to the testimony of prophecy, and specially in confirmation of the Resurrection. "Men and brethren, let me freely speak to you of the patriarch David," it is not of himself that he spake when he said, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor suffer my body ever to see corruption," but he "spake of the Resurrection of CHRIST, that *His* soul was not left in hell, neither *His* flesh did see corruption." Here we have the testimony of prophecy as well as miracles appealed to in the first sermon which was preached. Our LORD Himself used the same argument with the two disciples, on their way to Emmaus. "Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself."

Another sort of evidence which has great weight

with many minds is, not the "mighty deeds," but the "gracious words" of JESUS. "Never man spake like this man." All men wondered at "the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth." "The people were astonished at His doctrine." How different was the teaching of our LORD from that of the philosophers of old, and from the maxims of the ancient world. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the poor in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God. . . . Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, and ye shall have rest for your souls, for My yoke is easy and My burden is light." The same spirit breathes in the writings of the Apostles. "Be kindly affectioned one to another in brotherly love, in honour preferring one another." See also S. Paul's exquisite description of charity. Contrast with this the description of Homer's chief hero—

"Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer,"¹

or the boasted policy of Ancient Rome—

"Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos."²

While the humble and poor would feel the

¹ Restless and angry, inexorable, fierce.

² To spare the conquered and put down the proud.

touching consolation of this code of morals—the true philosopher would recognize in it the consummation of his highest aspiration after human excellence. And this may still be urged with effect as an incontrovertible evidence of the marvellous excellence of CHRIST's teaching.

To other minds the wonderful adaptation to human wants of the scheme of Redemption—the astonishing mercy of the Atonement, its philosophical suitableness to the otherwise helpless state of sinners, appears to be no product or possible invention of human thought, but on the face of it, a proof of Divine dispensation.

Of course above all these evidences, which are mainly addressed to the intellect, is the testimony of conscience, the intense love and gratitude of him who feels that he is partaker of the inestimable benefits of the Gospel of CHRIST—his sins pardoned and done away, his life and actions guided by the Spirit of Grace, and that he is living in a good hope of happiness eternal. “He that doeth the will of God shall know the doctrine, that it is of CHRIST.” And, analogously, those who are living in all the ordinances of the Church blameless, guiding their lives in her holy ways, these accept the testimony of the Church as of unquestionable cogency, and require no other evidence for their belief.

Nevertheless it is well for even the holiest and

sincerest Christian to be furnished with arguments to meet the cavils of the day, if not for their own sake, yet for the sake of those who might be influenced, and saved from unbelief by their charitable aid, and therefore it appears to me, that the matter ought to be widely spread through our popular literature—in order to guard the unwary against the snares with which their faith is surrounded.

I do not however think it is necessary always to meet sceptics with serious argument. It seems to admit that what they say really deserves consideration. Of course, if you think that you may possibly win them from their error, then, for charity's sake, you may seriously refute them. But I mean rather that, for your own sake, it is quite unnecessary to enter into discussion. Suppose, for instance, an unbeliever says there is no God, you have simply to say that you for your part believe, or rather are sure there is. To deny that there is a God Who made heaven and earth, and all that is in them, is in your view as unreasonable as to deny that the shortest way from one point to another is a straight line, or that the whole is greater than a part. The fact does not need discussion, it is self-evident.

Suppose, again, another philosopher tells you that God created a single animalcule or monad, and that from this animalcule there grow up, in

course of years, all the vast variety of the animal world—lions, tigers, sparrows, cockchafers, and all the rest, man included, you have only to say that you believe no such thing—he can give you no proof whatever, it is merely his fancy or private opinion; you believe that God created all these things when it was most suitable, that is, as the earth became fitted for their reception. It is mere waste of time to argue seriously with a man who puts forward his own mere private opinion as a scientific fact. Of course it is not meant to dispute many curious facts brought forward by Mr. Darwin and his friends about the development of species—the dying out of some, the improvement of others. The pigeon-fancier or the cattle-breeder can confirm these statements. But the monstrous theory founded on these few facts of the evolution of the animal creation, man included, from a single speck or monad—appears to me the wildest and most unfounded fiction which was ever devised by the brain of man, and really not deserving serious refutation. Never was a more evident myth palmed on human credibility. A writer in the last *Contemporary Review* for December tells us that “No one even slightly acquainted with scientific methods and results can for a moment brook the idea of any interference with the laws of external nature by prayer the physical nexus between phenomena, in

their ceaseless flux and reflux is never broken; while the order in which the phenomena appear is governed by the rigour of an adamant law. This conception of the absolute fixity of physical law is one which the progress of science has made axiomatic." That is to say, "Those are my opinions, and whoever thinks differently, all I can say is, he is the biggest fool on earth." Where is the proof of this modern theory? There is none whatever. It is contrary to the Bible, contrary to common sense, contrary to history. We know for certain that God has continually interfered in the course of nature—for aught we know He may be continually doing so now. What object could there be in creating this visible universe if He took no further interest about it? The notion is absurd. It is only a mere clique of men who fancy themselves philosophers, and some weak-minded persons who think their dogmas very fine, who hold these opinions about the non-interference of God in the work of His hands. All the rest of the world, the vast preponderance of human intellect believe, and always have believed, that the Great Creator of heaven and earth is Ruler and Governor of His work.

Take, again, the assertion of Strauss and others of his stamp, that there never was such a person as JESUS CHRIST,—that the incidents of His life are too marvellous to be believed, or that they rest

on no sure foundation of history. Archbishop Whately has shown in his amusing brochure "Historic Doubts relative to Napoleon Buonaparte," that you might just as well deny the existence of that eminent personage, as deny the existence of JESUS CHRIST. Who was Napoleon Buonaparte according to the accounts we read of him? An obscure adventurer from the Island of Corsica, is said to have placed himself at the head of the great French nation, and to have exercised despotic authority over the most intellectual people in the world. By the means of conscription he dragged hundreds of thousands of them unwillingly from their homes, and made them fight for his ambitious projects, and endure all sorts of hardships and privations: thousands of them being put to violent death. With their help he invaded and conquered all the nations of Europe. He occupied successively Berlin, Vienna, Madrid, Moscow, &c. At last the English beat him at Waterloo, and sent him to pass the end of his days on the solitary rock of S. Helena. Was there ever such a rigmarole or improbable fiction? And what authority have we for all these statements? Newspapers! Is it not notorious that newspapers are written merely to be sold; and that the editors put into them anything which may tickle the public fancy, and promote the sale of their publication? Besides,

suppose newspaper editors to be the most trustworthy of men, how can we be sure that they themselves were accurately informed? They did not see all these wonderful things,—they took their information second-hand from special correspondents and persons of that sort, whose business it was to make up a good story to fill the paper. So it is certainly most probable that all this story about Napoleon and his exploits was nothing more than a conspiracy amongst newspaper writers and stock-jobbers for their mutual advantage. There may have been some slight foundation of fact. But all this superstructure of improbable fiction which interested persons have built upon it is clearly unworthy of the credit of a philosophical and inquiring age! Very like these are the arguments brought forward by modern sceptics, who affect to disbelieve the history and life of our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

There is another mode of meeting the question adopted by Lacordaire in his Conferences delivered at Notre Dame some few years ago. His argument is this,—that no great public event, or series of events, which have exercised a great influence in the world, could be “foisted into the web of history,” unless they were true. He gives a supposed instance from French history, which I forget, and will substitute the following.—Suppose a person were to publish a book con-

taining a statement of this sort. "In the year 1800 Napoleon Buonaparte gathered a great army of 150,000 men at Boulogne, together with a vast flotilla and fleet of men-of-war, and, having conquered and dispersed the fleet commanded by Nelson, he invaded with his army the shores of Sussex. The English hastily got together all the troops they could collect and fought a great battle at Dorking, in which Napoleon, with his usual good fortune, was triumphant. After this he took possession of London without opposition, deposed King George III. and the Lord Mayor, substituted a French Prefect for the latter, and himself reigned at the palace of St. James' for three years; after which the English rose simultaneously against him, and drove him and his army out of the country." Suppose any person were to publish a statement like this, it is absolutely impossible that it could ever obtain a footing in history,—it would be looked on as a mere joke, and rather a bad one too.

Well, look at the historical account of the life of our LORD JESUS CHRIST,—Who wrought the greatest moral change that was ever effected in the world's history, Whose birth was of that importance that the whole civilised world dates the events of history according as they have happened before or after that great event. We have not only the history of the Divine Person re-

corded by the four Evangelists, but we have also the evidence of Roman and Jewish historians bearing testimony to the growing up of the Christian Church, until more or less gradually the whole Roman world with its Emperor embraced the Christian faith. Every history of the world which was ever written admits into its pages this account of these great events. They are, in fact, the basis of modern society. Such is the testimony of history. And it is clearly an impossibility that these important events should have been "foisted into the web of history" if they were not true. To say that JESUS CHRIST never lived would contradict all the principles of human knowledge.

Or to say that our LORD JESUS CHRIST was a mythical character, like Hercules or Prometheus, is absurd—because the time when He appeared was a civilised age. Athens was the centre of philosophy, Rome the head of political power. The art of writing was universally known. It is impossible that any fictitious person could ever be imagined and believed in, much less exercise the wide-spread influence which was exercised by CHRIST.

Distance of time does not at all weaken the truth of history in the case of notorious persons. We are as sure there was such a person as Augustus Cæsar as that there is such a person as Queen

Victoria. No sane person doubts the former. No one who is competent to judge of the truth of history, unless it be for the sake of promoting some cherished prejudice, can doubt of the reality of the life and actions of our **LORD JESUS CHRIST.**

CHAPTER X.

**SCEPTICS, ANCIENT AND MODERN.—GROUNDS OF BELIEF.—
TESTIMONY, INDUCTION, DEDUCTION.—THEIR RESPECTIVE
VALUE.—CREED OF THE SCEPTIC.**

THE Sceptics were a sect of ancient philosophers, whose peculiarity was to doubt everything; and what is remarkable, they seemed to like it rather than otherwise, they doubted on principle—and were rather proud of it. Instead of setting to work manfully and clearing up their doubts, they sat down quietly content to know nothing for certain. They were called “Pyrrhonists” from their founder, and “Aporetici,” because they were “poor creatures” who could not make up their minds about anything.

It was natural enough for men of those days to be doubtful on many important subjects, because they had not received a Revelation from God. Yet they seem to have doubted about some things which most men would think sufficiently evident. Some doubted of their own existence, till one of them propounded the celebrated formula of Metaphysics, “Cogito, ergo sum” (I think,

therefore I am.) Similar arguments one would have thought might have occurred to them. An Epicurean might have said "Prandeo, ergo sum" (I eat my dinner, therefore I am sure I am alive.) A Stoic might have pinched himself and said, "Sentio, ergo sum," (I feel, therefore I am.) No one could dispute any of these propositions. Another of the ancient philosophers doubted whether there was any such thing as motion; upon which his companion, to prove his error, got up and walked about the room. This is the famous mode of argument called "solvitur ambulando" ("the question is solved by walking,") which applies to matters which can be settled at once, and decided without more ado. I once heard of a sceptic who doubted whether his life was not all a dream, and his dreams his real existence.

We hear of some men who doubt whether there is a God. The best answer to this would, I think, come under the formula "solvitur ambulando." Take your sceptical friend out with you for a walk into the fields laden with corn and fruit, show him the glorious landscape, the beautiful flowers and trees, the cattle grazing on the hills; or at night bid him walk with you under the canopy of heaven, and gaze on the stars and silvery moon—quote to him the beautiful words of the Psalmist, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handy

work. O LORD, how glorious are Thy works, in wisdom hast Thou made them all." He must, indeed, be amongst the "Aporetici" if he fail to acknowledge the truth of your appeal. To most men the existence of a God, the Maker and Ruler of the Universe, seems as self-evident as their own existence—the denying His existence would seem just as nonsensical as denying that there was such a thing as motion. "Sum, ergo Deus est," (I am, therefore, there is a God,) seems to me, I confess, as self-evident an argument as "cogito, ergo sum."

There are other sceptics who, as I said in the last chapter, deny the plainest historical facts; for instance, the birth, death, and resurrection of our Blessed Lord as recorded in the Gospels. It may be well, therefore to analyze the ground of belief. Take first our belief in passing events—contemporary history—for each day which passes is evolving history. What are the grounds of our belief in what is going on in the world? Well, I suppose most of us receive much of the knowledge we have from the public journals. I get my *Times* every morning, and in half-an-hour or less, if I have time to read it, I know all that is going on in the world, I am master of all the details of contemporary history. I see perhaps that the Queen prorogued Parliament yesterday. But how can I be quite sure of the fact? First,

I know that it was expected that she would do so on that particular day ; then I am aware that the *Times* sends reporters to the House of Lords who write down all that occurs. Thirdly, I know that if the *Times* gave false information on the subject, there are scores of other papers which would convict it of incorrectness, and it would forfeit all its prestige, and cease to be relied on as the leading journal. Therefore I have no hesitation in accepting the fact that the Queen really did prorogue Parliament at the time mentioned. Besides the prorogation of Parliament, there are a thousand other facts which may equally be received as true—the police and law reports, sporting intelligence, births, marriages, and deaths. I know that it is the business of the *Times* to collect right information on all these subjects, that it has every possible facility for so doing, that it would be ruin to it commercially if it failed ; therefore I receive the intelligence contained in it without hesitation. Not, indeed, in all respects. I do not take for granted all that is contained in the leading articles for instance, for that consists not so much of facts as of opinions ; and these I take the liberty of forming for myself. The letters of special correspondents, written in haste from distant countries, in the midst of war and tumult, may not be quite accurate. Telegraphic despatches often “require confirmation ;” statements made by

strong partizans cannot always be implicitly relied on. Still, looking at the mass of general information contained in a sheet of the *Times*, we may take it as an accurate picture of the history of the day, which may be regarded as substantial truth.

It is possible that the editor may sometimes be hoaxed, or it is conceivable, at least, on sceptical principles, that he may choose to play off a hoax himself. The authorities in Printing House Square might publish a sort of sham paper for the fun of it—set down a number of marriages between people who never thought of such a thing, an account of doings in all parts of the world which never took place—sham law reports, and fictitious debates in Parliament—"Mysterious disappearance of the Archbishop of Canterbury," "Revolution in Russia," "Remarkable Longevity," "Financial Panic,"—it is, I say, physically possible, but so utterly incredible that it would not enter into any one's calculation, except indeed, of the sceptic. The same argument which applies to contemporary history is applicable also to the history of the past. It is possible physically that our standard histories, on which we rely, may all be wrong. Clarendon's History of the Rebellion may, sceptically speaking, be a myth, and no such persons may have lived as Charles I. and Oliver Cromwell, but speaking according to common

sense, the idea is simply ridiculous. On sceptical principles, Cæsar's Commentaries, Tacitus, Suetonius, may be all fabrications ; no such persons as Julius Cæsar, Augustus, or Tiberius, may have existed : but any one who should avow such sceptical notions would be judged to be talking nonsense. So in respect to the Life and Death of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, recorded as they are by four Evangelists,—the idea of His history being a fable, is absurd. In the latter case the testimony is stronger than in any other. We do not hear that Tacitus, or any Roman or Greek historian, or Clarendon in more recent times, submitted to death in testimony of the truth of his history, but almost all of the first Evangelists and preachers of the Gospel sealed their testimony by their blood. We judge, therefore, without doubt that their testimony is the truth. Even as mere human testimony we should be constrained to accept the history of the life and actions of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. But we believe that the account written in the Gospel is further attested by Divine authority. On this, however, I will not now dilate.

Besides the certainty which we obtain from undoubted testimony, there are other certain and unquestionable evidences, on the strength of which we firmly believe things. The most reliable, perhaps, is induction. Induction is the foundation of almost all science. For instance, we throw

a stone up into the air, and observe that it always comes down again, if we throw it up a hundred times. We have no doubt that if other persons threw up stones on the other side of the world, or if they threw up other things, they would be sure to come down again. It is one of those "laws" which God has given to the universe, and is evident to our common experience. We have, therefore, a sure induction, involving a principle—namely, the principle of gravitation, which is found to apply to all parts of the world, and to explain a vast variety of scientific facts.

But there are a great many things equally undoubted, which, nevertheless, we cannot ascertain of our own knowledge, but with regard to which it would be absurd to be sceptical. We can accept the facts on testimony. For instance, philosophers tell us that water boils at a certain temperature at the top of mountains. Well, some of us, perhaps, have not been at the top of mountains, and if we had been, did not happen to take a tea-kettle with us. Nevertheless, all scientific men tell us that it certainly is the case, and we see no reason to disbelieve them. This sort of knowledge embraces a large portion of the knowledge which we accept as trustworthy, and add to our intellectual store. It is made up of testimony and induction united. To unscientific persons who cannot make experiments for them-

selves, almost all philosophic knowledge rests on this foundation.

But besides testimony and induction, which when formally perfect we may implicitly rely on, there is also the argument of deduction, by which we infer truth from ascertained premisses. And this sort of argument may be divided into mathematical demonstration, and moral, or philosophical deduction. Mathematical demonstration, such as Euclid's Elements, and a vast variety of calculations in geometry and arithmetic, may be implicitly trusted; but moral deduction is not so certain, because it rests more on human reason than on actual facts. "Nothing," says Sir Humphrey Davy, "is more difficult, and requires more caution than philosophical deduction." There are many very true deductions, but others which are not reliable. We know that it is possible for philosophers to be run away with by their imagination. Old people will sometimes tell the same old story over and over again till they quite believe it. So philosophers will dwell so long on some very doubtful deduction that they come to have no question in their own minds that it is true. A vast variety of notions and theories of this sort issue continually from the press, which may or may not be true: certainly they are not to be accepted with the same confidence as we accept what is presented to us by testimony or

induction. Master minds indeed like Newton's, who have not only powerful insight, but also judgment and discrimination, may deduce theories which the intellectual world would accept eventually with the assurance of perfect conviction. But men of inferior calibre rush into conclusions with undue precipitancy. They may or may not be correct. For instance, a geologist has observed with great care the phenomena of the earth's surface, and specially of the British Isles, and he tells me that there was a time when the country which we inhabit was submerged in the ocean, or covered with perpetual snow. This is rather startling, if I have never thought of the matter. I do not deny the fact, but I ask for further proof of his assertion. The geologist is so good as to explain to me his reason, and I acquiesce at least in the probability of his theory. Another geologist tells us that there was a time when the British Channel and the German Ocean were all dry land—that England was united with the Continent—and “the Thames was a tributary of the Rhine.” I listen to his reasons, but they do not quite satisfy me. I do not quite see it. His arguments do not seem to me sufficient to warrant the hypothesis. Another man goes further, and tells me that he has been thinking over the matter all his life, and has come to the conclusion, as his father did before him, that man was not originally

created in the image of God, but that he was derived by evolution from an ape. I ask him for his proof, but he has very little or none to give, only a very fixed and decided opinion of his own. I see plainly that, clever, and able, and earnest as he may be, he has taken up a notion which is not tenable, and dwelt on it and told the same story over and over again, until he has convinced himself of its truth. I can only regret that he should have bestowed his time and acknowledged talents on such unprofitable labour.

From what is said above, it will be seen that our sure ground of belief as to ordinary facts of history or daily life is testimony—our best ground for scientific facts is induction—but that deduction or argument from these facts must needs partake of the uncertainty inseparable from the action of the human mind. It depends not on facts, but on man's uncertain reasoning.

P.S.—Pascal has somewhere in his works, "The Creed or No-Creed of a Sceptic." The following is an adaptation of the idea to the present times :

"I am not sure whether I believe in God the FATHER Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. To call God our FATHER is anthropomorphism, and therefore I suppose not philosophic. God may have made the materials of the world in

the shape of nebulæ or star dust ; but I am not certain.

“ I do not know whether or no I have a spirit or soul within me, or whether my thoughts do not proceed from some collocation of the molecules of the brain.

“ Whence I came I am entirely ignorant, whether God created the first father of our race in His own image, or whether we are not all descended from some ‘ hairy quadruped ’ or ape.

“ I have no notion why I was placed in the world, or what I have to do now I am here. If a good God placed me here I suppose I ought to worship Him and try to know what He would have me do. But if I was evolved by some law or order of Nature, I cannot make that the object of worship.

“ As I know not whence I came, so I know not whither I go, whether at death I shall fall into a state of annihilation, whether I shall be reduced to my original atoms and absorbed into the general order of nature, or whether I shall have to give an account of the deeds done in the flesh, and have my portion accordingly, in heaven or hell.

“ If I have to give account for my actions I fear it will go hard with me, for I have done many evil things, and I have no ground on which I can hope for remission of sins.

“ Behold then my wretched condition. Yet I

suppose I shall live and die in it ; for though I am in doubt about all these things, it is not my intention to try and find them out. It is too much trouble to have to make up one's mind about such things. I suppose I shall glide smoothly along the stream of life. I shall eat and drink, and to-morrow die. Then perhaps I shall know about these things—perhaps not. But may it not then be too late ? I am sure I cannot tell."

CHAPTER XI.

USE OF THE IMAGINATION IN SCIENCE.—HOW MONKEYS BECAME MEN.

AT a recent meeting of the British Association, Professor Tyndall gave an interesting lecture on the "Use of the Imagination in Science." I only remember one of his illustrations which was to the effect that the tail of a comet was some fifty thousand miles in length, but so extremely subtile that it might be all packed into a lady's portmanteau. I think he added, "if it were packed close enough." Whether this was a sly hit at some of his lady friends who travel, as some ladies will, with unusually large portmantaus I cannot say, but certainly the illustration showed a lively imagination in the lecturer.

At another meeting of the same august body Sir William Thompson, the President, ventured a good way into the region of imagination. It is, as we all know, a favourite dogma of modern philosophers that all the organised varieties of animal and vegetable life have been evolved out

of a single germ or monad; but the question is, how did the primordial monad come into existence,—at least on this planet? Sir W. Thompson's conjecture is this—that when the earth was cooling down from its incandescent state and beginning to be crusted over with solid matter, a stone or fragment from some broken planet which was floating above in the region of space,—one of those aerolites which are seen in the shape of the November meteors, retaining fortunately a seed of ancient moss or lichen, conveyed the necessary germ to the barren earth, and from that beginning grew up the fauna and flora of our present globe,—the corn which forms the staple of our food, the stately oak and cedar of the forest, the vast variety of the animal race from man down to the smallest animalcule, all sprang in the course of ages from this primordial monad.

Mr. Darwin in his publications exemplifies, perhaps, more than any one, the use of the imagination in science,—in truth, the whole of his system is simply imaginative. Some writers on analogous subjects show a considerable defect in this valuable quality. One principal objection which Dr. Colenso finds to the account of the Deluge is that he cannot imagine how the snipes and vultures were fed and kept alive.

As the use of imagination is recommended by

such high authority, I will venture to try my hand at the explanation of certain phenomena which a few years ago not a little puzzled the philosophers, and, I believe, have never yet been satisfactorily accounted for; I mean the discovery of a large quantity of a rude kind of flint-weapons in the valley of the Somme near Amiens. The papers were for some weeks full of the question. I venture, not without diffidence, to lay the fruits of my own imagination before my readers.

My notion is that the remarkable accumulation of flint weapons in that particular spot is referable to the gorilla period, or rather the transition period between the gorilla and man. We know, so at least Mr. Darwin tells us, that the last development of the animal race before the appearance of man was "a hairy quadruped furnished with tail and pointed ears, probably arboreal in his habits." Now the problem to be solved is, how did creatures of this sort become developed into man? I wonder it has not struck our imaginative philosopher that it must certainly have been by the discovery of the use of flints. In the early age of the world the use of flints must have made almost as great a difference in the manners and customs of gorillas as the art of printing, or the discovery of steam has brought about in more modern times. Consider well the

facts. These creatures of arboreal habits dwelt chiefly in the trees, clinging to the branches with their tails,—fed probably on acorns and beech nuts, when by one of those fortunate occurrences, which sometimes happen, such as the falling of the apple which suggested to Newton the theory of gravitation, or the boiling over of a tea-kettle which was the means of the discovery of the power of steam, the use of a sharp-edged flint may have arisen in this way. It is remarkable, as Pope says in his Rape of the Lock,—

“What great events from trivial causes spring.”

Perhaps some gorilla cut his finger with a flint, or more probably his toe, for being “arboreal in his habits” he would naturally not be clever in treading on the ground. Being of a philosophical and imaginative tone of mind it would occur to him that if the flint was sharp enough to cut his finger or his foot, it might be used for cutting other things. I do not suppose that any patents were taken out in those days, else the discoverer of the use of the flint might certainly have made a fortune. The probability is, that when once discovered, the use of flint came into very general use. And imagine only the radical change which this one discovery must have made. Instead of living on acorns and beech-nuts as heretofore, and having no better shelter in bad weather than

a few broken boughs put together in the shape of an umbrella,—such as the apes of a low degree of civilization even now use in the forests of Africa,—the gorilla, with the use of his flint-axe could cut down trees and build a hut,—he could dig roots for his subsistence,—the truffle, the pig-nut, or even the potato; then he could defend himself against the larger animals, and kill the smaller for his use; he could open oysters and split cocoa-nuts. He could pare his nails, nay, perhaps, shave himself! What a range of new thought and potential culture would be open before him!

It is probable that at this critical period of the world's history, as at many other critical periods, there arose a gorilla who was above the age in which he lived, a pioneer to lead society onward in the march of intellect. We can well imagine that some such gorilla arose—a Confucius, or a Solon amongst them. Let us suppose a gorilla of this advanced intellect summoning his fellows to a conference on the banks of the Somme,—as a gathering of the British Association might be held at Brighton. “My good friends and fellow-gorillas,” we can imagine him saying, “we are assembled together at a great crisis of our history. By the law of order we have been steadily advancing onwards, and have now made not a step only, but a great stride in civilization. I need not

point out to you the immense advantage of the power of flint. It is an era in the world's history. From being arboreal in our habits, we have come to walk firmly on the ground, and to carry our heads erect."

[The advanced gorilla evidently anticipated the splendid idea contained in the lines of Ovid:—

"Pronaque cum spectent animalia cætera terram,
Os homini sublime dedit, cælumque tueri
Jussit, et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus."¹]

"But, gentlemen,—I mean gorillas,—there is still one great drawback to our progress—one circumstance which mars our aspirations. I need scarcely mention that I allude to our tails. Formerly when we were arboreal in our habits, the caudal appendage was valuable and useful. It aided us greatly in our arboreal climbings. But now that we aspire to walk with form erect, and raise our eyes to heaven, it is evident that our tails are greatly in our way. Besides they are often very uncomfortable when one sits down to dinner—as, of course, all well-bred gorillas do (hear, hear). They are, in fact, a sad incumbrance. And just at this critical time the great order of nature has furnished us, in the discovery

¹ While others of God's creatures downward look
Towards earth, He gave to man a face sublime,
And bade him gaze on heaven, and contemplate
The starry sphere with countenance erect.

of flint, with the means of disencumbering ourselves of our tails, which I must say are neither useful nor ornamental."

Great applause followed the termination of the wise gorilla's speech. A general enthusiasm was kindled, and it required but a little more encouragement to induce the assembly to fall to work, with but few dissentient voices, and cut off each other's tails with the flint weapons, and having done so, to fling their knives, tails and all, into the river. The tails floated down to the "melancholy ocean," the flint-weapons were imbedded in the Somme, for the benefit of future philosophers. And in commemoration of this great event, it was enacted that when each young gorilla which was born had its tail cut off, the flint-weapon was considered sacred, and flung into the nearest river; which is the only way of accounting for the numerous weapons of that sort which are from time to time discovered. Of course, after a few generations had had their tails cut off, they gradually dwindled into a mere stump, which we now call the *os coccygis*.

Now I challenge any one of my readers to show that there is any flaw in this argument, I mean on the principle of the use of the imagination in science, advocated by Professor Tyndall. Mr. Darwin says that no explanation has "ever been given of the loss of the tail by certain apes

and men." Well, I have given one. There is the fact which forms the fundamental basis of the modern theory,—the development of man from the arboreal animal, and next the fact of the more or less sudden disappearance of the tail about the time when flint weapons were invented. Surely it requires little more than to put two and two together, and we have the whole history before us, and a very important part of history it is. In fact, if one considers well, even without the use of the imagination, it must have been the most critical period of the world. Nothing perhaps in the history of man can be conceived more important than the era of his development from the brute. Then, in confirmation of the above theory, we have the traditional apologue of the "Fox who had lost his tail." How easy after such a lapse of time to mistake the gorilla for the fox. One might also "imagine" that the old song which was made when Lord Collingwood nearly caused a mutiny by cutting off his sailors' pig-tails, bears somehow on the subject,—

" We didn't mind it now and then
A leg or arm to spare, sir,
But all our tails to lose at once,
'Twas cutting work to bear, sir."

It must be manifest how much preferable is the use of the imagination, recommended by Professor Tyndall, to the old-fashioned method of

philosophical analysis. "The old Baconian induction was," as Canon Rawlinson said at the Church Congress, "a careful interrogation of nature, and its legitimate object was to establish as absolutely true such general laws as could be distinctly proved by an examination of all the phenomena. Modern science has substituted for the laborious investigation of facts the easy method of hypothesis. The authors of these beautiful systems, which they have spun out of their own imagination, naturally become enamoured of them." Of course they do. I can assure you I feel very proud of the bantling which my own imagination has created. It seems to me just as promising as any of Professor Tyndall's or Mr. Darwin's either.

CHAPTER XII.

THE WILL OF MAN—THE WILL OF GOD—HOW CONNECTED
WITH EACH OTHER.

MUCH is said and written in the present day about the origin and first cause of things—whence life and motion proceed?—what are the first processes of the operations of nature? Many things of which we had hitherto known only the existence are traced up to their cause: at least, many clever guesses are made, and sometimes ingenious proofs are not wanting. The forces of nature—light, heat, electricity, motion, are more or less investigated and, to a certain extent, explained. And yet with all the scientific analysis there is always something beyond the power of human discovery—something which science cannot trace or prove, but is obliged to accept by faith, or by common sense.

Let me give one or two examples. Suppose I raise my arm, what is the power by which I do so? We know that it is by the power of the muscles—the power which they have to contract,

and so act by the leverage of the sinews on the bones. But what causes the muscles to contract so as to raise the arm? It is the operation of the nerves which act upon the muscles. But how are the nerves thus set in motion? It is by the impulse of the brain, of which they are, as it were, expansions or feelers. Thus the brain operates on the nerves, the nerves on the muscles, and the muscles raise the arm.

All this is easily ascertainable. But then there is another step which is not so readily explained, at least, not by natural science. What is it that causes the brain to act, and to put forth this energy? What is it that really sets in motion those various organs, the operation of which we have so far traced? *It is the Will*—the will of man—impalpable, undiscernible by scientific analysis, yet operating everywhere throughout the world—everywhere at least where man is found.

And what a wonderful force is the will of man! For if, as we have seen, it is the will of man by which the arm is raised, then everything which the united immaterial and material power of man accomplishes is traceable to the same energy. What wonders throughout the world has the will of man accomplished, what cities has it built, what ships has it constructed, what vast extent of territory has it cultivated, what works of art, of literature, has it wrought! All these things has

the will of man accomplished through those organs which God has provided for his use. All the works which man has wrought have proceeded from that impalpable immaterial essence or agency, or impulse, which we call the Will.

These thoughts, however, are but preliminary to the much wider inquiry into the origin of the will of man itself, and, in fact, into the origin of the visible and invisible universe with all its complicated arrangements and forces. The works of man, great and important as they are when considered by themselves, yet are but inconsiderable when compared with the vast universe, with all the wonderful operations which it exhibits.

A philosopher once received a visit from a friend who unhappily was an atheist. The philosopher had lately purchased a beautiful globe, which caught the eye of the visitor. "Who made you that beautiful globe?" said the atheist. "Who made it?" said the philosopher, "why no one—it made itself!" The atheist perceived at once the satire conveyed in his friend's observation, and we may hope profited by it.

Strange it is that there should be men in the nineteenth century who have gone back to the darkness of heathen ages, and actually believe that this world, and all that is in it, and all the wonderful processes of nature, should have come into existence, and should go on in their course

without the intervention of an all-wise and all-governing Will.

Let us endeavour, by the help of modern science, to trace up some of the operations of nature to their source. Consider the simplest, or at least the commonest, of all things—the bread which we daily eat. Whence comes it? We know that it is made of flour ground in the mill, and baked in the oven, and that the flour is made of the grain which grows in our fields. But how is it that the grain grows in the fields? It is sown by the labourer. But how is it that when sown in the field the grain germinates and puts forth first the tender blade, then the stalk, and then the ear, filled with food? The grain which is sown dry and hard, is caused to germinate by the operation of the rain and heat, and thereby its chemical properties are called forth into action, and “a definite molecular action is the result.” But how is it that the rain falls in due season? The rain falls from the clouds; and the clouds, how are they spread over the land? The clouds are formed by the condensation of the invisible vapour of water, which is contained in the air. And whence the constant supply of this vapour? It is drawn up from the sea and moistened surface of the earth. It falls upon the land, and is drained off by the rivers and watercourses; and again and again taken up and distributed as

before to fertilize the earth. We might go on to many other steps in the process. What causes the rarefaction and condensation by which the water is drawn up into the air, collected into clouds, and descends in drops upon the earth? It is caused by the concurrence of warmer and colder strata of air. The air is rarefied and drawn up mainly at the tropics, and the consequent rushing in of colder currents to supply the place, results in the formation of those wholesome winds, the soft and temperate breezes from the south, the strong west winds, or the cold currents from the east and north, whereby the stagnation of the atmosphere is prevented, and the operations of nature are continued from year to year, and the earth yields its increase for the wants of man. We might go on from one fact to another, the theory of heat and electricity, the influence of the sun and other agencies. But after all we come to the question, Who or What caused all the wonderful dependence of the forces of nature one upon another? And the answer at which we arrive is that it is the *Will of God*. The construction of this wonderful earth which we inhabit, and all the elaborate contrivances for the sustentation of its inhabitants, was no fortuitous concurrence of atoms, coming together of their own accord, any more than the globe in the philosopher's study was a fortuitous concurrence of atoms—no mere chance

collocation of molecules, but a determination of mind, an operation of the Creative Will of God. That was the real and efficient cause of the universe which we see around us, and of the laws by which creation is governed.

Thus does philosophical analysis, even independently of revelation, prove to us that the primary agent of all existing things, is an Omnipotent Will—the Will of God by Whom and through Whom all things were made and continue to exist.

We see, then, that there are two Wills in the world—the Will of God and the Will of Man. And here we may discern one reason of the absolute necessity of a constant regulative power in the Will of God. The sceptic may say, Why did not God make a world in which all should be good and perfect—no power of resistance to His Will? It seems to be an obvious and sufficient answer to the cavil, that God created free agents as being of a higher order of beings than creatures without a power of choice. But the existence of beings having a will of their own, absolutely necessitates the constant interference of the higher Will, to set right the disarrangements caused by the will of the inferior beings. And herein is the highest and most wonderful attribute of God's perfection—namely, the power to govern and regulate the perverse wills of beings who are still

not the less free. Hence we see also the strange misconception of those who could for a moment imagine that the Will of God was "vengeful, arbitrary, variable, capricious." It is no more vengeful and capricious than the will of the Judge who, according to their respective deserts, condemns one man to ten years' penal servitude, another to five, and acquits a third. The Will of God is perfect justice, rendering to every man according to his work.

It would have been a mighty manifestation of Almighty power and wisdom to have made this great material universe—the sun, the moon, and stars, all maintaining their appointed order without power of deviation in the slightest degree—still greater is the wonder of the animal race, each in its kind provided with organs for the sustenance and prolongation of its kind. But the marvel of the universe is man created "in the image of God"—man endowed with will and freedom of action—free to choose the course which he will take. To govern the order of the human race—their relations with each other, their national combinations, their wonderful powers of varied action—to combine all this in one harmonious whole, to regulate continually the destinies of free agents, this it is which fills us with highest awe and admiration.

But this is the province of religion, not of

science. Mark the wide difference in the power of each. Science can investigate and discover, to a certain extent, the mysteries of the material world, the strong forces of nature, the relations of organic or inorganic matter, but it is utterly powerless to appreciate the Will or moral nature of man, it can conceive only a fixed order of nature, things growing up, and going on according to some definite unbending law. But of the relation of the Will of God to man, the moral choice, the power of prayer, the graces of the Spirit, it has not the most remote conception. All this is the province of religion.

I hope I may be pardoned for adding to my imperfect remarks the following admirable passage from a Paper in *Fraser's Magazine*, for September, 1873, by Leonard Woolsey Bacon, Clerk:—

“It may be freely granted that according to the view here presented the universe is incalculably, inconceivably complicated. Professor Tyndall's universe is a neat machine, having its object, if not its cause, in itself. If it was made for a toy to see how smoothly it would spin, and how aptly part would play upon part, and mechanical, chemical and vital systems would work together, it is altogether successful. . . . But if the Christian idea of prayer and all that it implies is to be admitted, if we are to believe that this

prodigious machine of the physical system is geared to run in connection and subordination with a moral and spiritual system, which is further complicated, wheel within wheel, by the presence of a thousand millions of independent wills ; in such sort that all the tricks, turns, and changes of the material system shall coincide precisely with the exigency of the whole moral system, and of its every individual member, bringing to prayer its timely answer, to pride and folly its fit discipline, to sin its fatherly chastisement, to the Church deliverance and triumphs, to mankind at last complete Salvation,—if such be the condition of the universe, the mind grows bewildered in the attempt to conceive it. The truth is that science in its eagerness to grasp the material object of the universe altogether ignores the reason of the world's being, namely, the training to perfection of the wills of men."

Since writing the above, I have seen the report of the meeting of the British Association for Science, and have copied from it the following remarks of the President of the department of Biology, Professor Allman.

"He did not wish to shut his eyes to the difficulties in the way of accepting the theory of Evolution when carried to the extreme length for which some of its advocates contend

Even accepting as a great truth the theory of Evolution he would not attribute to it more than it could fairly claim, for there remains a residual phenomenon still unaccounted for. No physical hypothesis founded on any indisputable fact has yet explained the origin of this primordial protoplasm, and above all, of its marvellous properties which render evolution possible, in heredity and adaptivity, for these properties are the cause and not the effect of evolution. For the cause of this cause we have sought in vain amongst the physical forces which surround us, until we are at last compelled to rest upon *an independent volition*—a far-seeing intelligent design.” It is something to have recognized by physicists the great truth of an independent volition, or personal Deity in the work of creation. But surely this admission involves at least the possibility of a continually acting volition, i.e., a divine Providence in the affairs of the world. In reading the report of the discussion at this meeting I was much gratified by observing the tone of moderation, and the general absence of the declaration of atheistic opinion ; which I trust may be taken as a guarantee that the recent attacks on religion are to be attributed to a few only amongst the philosophers of the age, and not to be considered as the tone of feeling of the general body of men of science.

In the same spirit Mr. Powell, M.P., proposed a vote of thanks to the lecturer on Molecules. "He was thankful for the manly manner in which Professor Maxwell had acknowledged the existence of a Great Primary Cause. As long as the scientific world acknowledged and proclaimed the existence of a final (?) cause, and religion and science joined hand in hand together, both might safely advance from triumph to triumph without halting or doubting."

CHAPTER XIII.

LAW.—NOT CORRECTLY SO CALLED.—RATHER CONSTITUTED ORDER UPHELD BY GOD, AND REVERSIBLE AT HIS PLEASURE.—BISHOP VAN MILDERT.—SPINOZA.

It is a very strange and unaccountable fancy which has got into the heads of some of our modern philosophers,—a notion contrary to the belief of all civilized nations, nay rather of all who have lived upon the world since its creation, except it may be some sect of Pagan philosophers, namely, that there is no overruling Providence which governs the affairs of the world, but that all things go on by a certain fixed and unalterable law.

Now, in the first place, though the word “law” may be used popularly to express what they mean by it, strictly and philosophically speaking it is incorrect to use the same term in respect to free agents and inanimate objects. A righteous man obeys the law of God by his own free will. The sun and moon obey because they cannot help it. In fact, to use the word “obey”

is incorrect. More strictly speaking, man obeys the law, the sun and moon continue in their appointed course. But modern philosophers do not seem to see the distinction.

Again, one would think that not only logical argument, but even common sense would teach people that it was absolutely impossible to prove that there were no deviations from what they term the law of Nature—no supernatural occurrence. In such a case it is altogether impracticable to prove a negative. The affirmative is proved by the universal consent of history that many supernatural occurrences have taken place in the world. But the absolute impossibility of disproving this our philosophers do not seem to understand or choose to ignore; and by the vehemence of their assertion they seem to think to make up for the absence of argument.

“The habitual recognition of law,” says Mr. Herbert Spencer, “distinguishes modern thought from ancient thought.” “The entire range of inductive philosophy,” says Mr. Baden Powell, “is at once based upon, and in every instance tends to confirm, by immense accumulation of evidence the grand truth of the universal order and constancy of natural causes as a primary law of belief.” But it would be a mistake to suppose that this our own generation, or even the present century could claim the honour of this grand

discovery. "The apostate Jew Spinoza," says Bishop Van Mildert in his Boyle Lectures, (Vol. I., p. 335,) "with extraordinary endowments of mind, laboured to subvert the principles of the Gospel. . . . The evident design of his works is to deny the Creator of the universe. . . . He systematically confounds Him with the material universe, and ascribes to Him no agency but that of an involuntary or physical energy ; making all things to be derived from Him, not as of His own good will and pleasure, or as *Creator* of the world, but by *necessary* emanation from Him as the passive fountain of existence. He inveighs against those who deem it necessary to acknowledge any *Creator* of the world. As the natural consequence of these Pantheistic, or rather atheistic principles, he denies a Providence, scoffs at the doctrine of heaven and hell, and of evil spirits, represents all divine worship as nugatory, and ridicules as vain superstition the expectation of rewards and punishments in a future state." Our modern philosophers it will be seen cannot boast of even originality in their peculiar theories.

Scarcely a doctrine or notion from the cavil of Colenso to the ape-theory of Darwin has not been anticipated generations ago, and hence appears the fallacy of the assertion that these objections to religion are the result of the great advancement of science in the present generation.

In fact they sprang up when science was comparatively in its infancy.

Bishop Van Mildert, after summing up the labours of the sceptics and infidels of the last century, says, "It is difficult to calculate the mischief effected by these infatuated men. But when we find that to be tainted with infidelity was considered as an almost certain criterion of wit, knowledge, and good breeding, we cannot but suppose that among the vain and superficial, (who constitute always a majority of mankind,) great numbers have been led astray. It is also evident to those who carefully examine their respective labours, that infidels of more recent date have greatly availed themselves of the productions of their predecessors in impiety, so that although for the most part the authors themselves are now unheeded and forgotten, yet through the medium of modern plagiarists they are restored as it were to new life and vigour; though dead, they yet utter the voice of blasphemy, and retain the power of spreading it far and wide."¹

The good bishop might have been describing the state of things in the present day, except that in spite of the intellectual labours of the Duke of Somerset and Professor Huxley, it cannot quite be said that infidelity is a "criterion of wit,

¹ See Boyle Lectures, Vol. I., p. 367.

knowledge, and good breeding" in the present day. And unlike the Church in past days, the present Church has, we trust, enough of zeal and intellect to repel the aggressions of the enemy.

But to return to our more immediate subject.

The law which these philosophers speak of is as Canon Birks has well described it, "a law with no lawgiver to impose it, no sanction for its observance, no power of choice in its subjects, no consciousness that it is observed, no possibility of being transgressed the most subtle and evanescent of metaphysical abstractions, if not the most misleading and delusive of terms."¹

It is contrary to all analogy and reason to suppose a law enacted without any power to carry it out or to enforce it. We know that if human laws were so left to themselves they would be a dead letter. If there were no magistrates or policemen the laws would be nugatory. Law is nothing, of no force, of no avail, unless there be an executive to enforce it. It is altogether unphilosophical and absurd to speak of a law of nature which shall go on of itself. Our unassisted reason clearly teaches us that God is everywhere present guiding and controlling the great universe which He has made, carrying out the laws what He has enacted, upholding and preserving the work of His hand.

¹ See the Scripture Doctrine of Creation, p. 154.

GOD has indeed established a law which shall not be broken, and upholds it by His continual Providence—a general law so uniform and consistent that science may consider it as absolute. All calculations and speculations may be founded on the hypothesis that God's Almighty power is engaged in carrying out the laws of the universe in so exact and uniform a manner that whatever deviation there may be from them need not in the least interfere with their scientific researches. And yet, at the same time, it is equally true that God, without interfering with the ordinary course of nature as a general rule, but maintaining it by His power, does nevertheless, according to His good will and pleasure work miracles, more or less frequent, for special purposes, which, without deranging the course of the world in any perceptible degree, nevertheless suffice not only to show that He is the Ruler and Governor of the universe, but that for special objects He can when He chooses change the law which He has constituted.

And the cause of this occasional variation is obvious. We have seen in the last chapter that there are two wills—the will of God, which is absolute, and the will of man, which is subordinate. We all know instinctively that we have a will of our own. There can be no need to go about to prove it, because it is as self-evident as that we exist. It is equally self-evident that

man's will is oftentimes perverse, and contrary to the Will of God, so that God changes His purpose in order to remedy the evil. When God first created man He placed him in the garden of Eden, in an abode of happiness ; but when man rebelled against His law He drove him forth, and caused the thorn and the thistle to grow up. At another time God in His just anger destroyed one whole generation of men by the waters of a Flood. This change of purpose is often avowed. "I said indeed," said He to Eli, "that thy house and the house of thy father, should walk before Me for ever. But now, the LORD saith, be it far from Me, for those that honour Me I will honour, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed." Our duty through life—our trial for eternity, is to conform our will to the Holy Will of God. If we did so, all things might go on in one regular course. But when man sets himself against the Will of God there is need of the exertion of God's Omnipotent power to control and rectify the anomaly. It is not that God is inconsistent, but simply just, in His government of the world.

Another influence which acts upon the Will of God, and induces Him to modify His laws, is the love and obedience of His creatures. As the perverseness of their will may cause God to act with severity—to send the storm and tempest, the

pestilence and the drought—so the humble and faithful prayers of His people induce God to withdraw those chastisements—to send the refreshing rain and sunshine, to stay the pestilence, or in a thousand ways to listen with kind condescension to the request of His people, whom He has invited, nay commanded, to call on Him. It is impossible to know always what are the regular operations of the law which God has constituted and upholds, and what are deviations from the regular order, which God has caused, whether it be to curb the anomalies of man's perverse will, or to meet his dutiful prayers. Ordinarily speaking, the world goes on by a law, or more properly speaking, a constituted order, which cannot be broken. The philosopher may calculate the revolution of the planets, the eclipse of the sun and moon. Very rarely, indeed, some deviation would be perceptible. An astronomer watching the heavens from the towers of Babylon some three thousand years and more ago may have been perplexed by the unusual prolongation of daylight—he would be puzzled to account for it, as a modern philosopher might be puzzled to account for the appearance of an unexpected comet or meteor—but nothing further would come of it. With the exception of the prolonged daylight all would go on as before—the next day would be no longer than other days; he would note, perhaps, the

singular occurrence in his tablet; and centuries after, when the Jews brought with them their Holy Scriptures to Babylon, it would be discovered that the strange occurrence which had been recorded by some former astronomer was the famous incident in their history when the sun stood still upon Gibeon and the moon in the valley of Ajalon. Time rolls on, and another notable phenomenon astonishes the wise men of the East. An unknown star appears in the heavens, and by a strange impulse they are led to follow it, and it conducts them to the stable where the infant SAVIOUR, the SON of GOD, is laid.

With the single exception of the Flood, I do not think that there is any miracle which could perceptibly disturb the ordinary laws of nature—except for the briefest time. And it is remarkable, though not to be wondered at, that almost every nation of the earth has preserved the memory of that event. Very recently a new record of the Deluge has been discovered among the ruins of ancient Assyria. This great miracle stands almost alone with respect to the world-wide impression which it caused. The wonderful cures wrought by our LORD during His ministry—the “mighty works” whereby He demonstrated His divine power and goodness may, no doubt, have had a perceptible influence on the “bills of mortality,” if any such were kept in Judæa in those days—

but no disarrangement could have been made, except momentarily, in the ordinary course of the world.

Therefore, I do not see why philosophers are so jealous of these historical incidents, and so anxious to vindicate the "law" of nature. Their calculations and experiments may proceed without hindrance. The Almighty Ruler carries on His government of the world by the laws which He has given, and when for special purposes He deviates from them, no derangement is caused in the general course of His Providence. The planets roll on in their courses—the forces of nature continue to operate as heretofore. Why, then, should philosophers make all this pother?

To speak the truth, I fear it is simply that an evil spirit of unbelief has perverted their minds, the pride of human intellect has been deceived by the power of evil. It is but one instance amongst a thousand of the perverseness with which evil works in opposition to the Will of God. The heart of man, unsanctified by the spirit of grace, is deceitful and desperately wicked. Sometimes it is led astray by the lusts of the flesh, sometimes by the lust of power. What fearful evils do men of highest intellect work in this world by the sinful desire of lording it over their fellows. At another time Satan works by the pride of intellect. In all ages—not less at the beginning of the

Gospel than in the present day—"philosophy falsely so-called" has led men away from the Truth of God. And in this department of human evil there is one fearful phenomenon—that men are not content themselves to depart from the truth and deny the God who made them, but with perverse maliciousness they are for ever striving to drag down others into the same abyss of misery. It is one of the most fearful phenomena of the present day, that we have amongst us men of high intellect, well-mannered, agreeable, able to inform our minds on matters of high interest with regard to the visible world and its forces and arrangements, and yet who make it their business purposely to infuse doubts about the Christian faith into the minds of those who are so unwary as to listen to their fallacies. These men have been deceived into thinking that religion in some way or other interferes with scientific truth. Nothing can be more incorrect. The province of religion is totally different. Its sole object is to induce men to repent of their sins, and live to the glory of God. Yet by a strange hallucination Satan has conjured up an unnatural aversion amongst men of science, against the pure and holy law of God and His SON JESUS CHRIST. It behoves all serious Christians themselves to beware, and to warn their brethren against this most fearful evil of modern days.

CHAPTER XIV.

UNKNOWABLE AND UNTHINKABLE.—GOD NOT UNKNOWN
EXCEPT TO THOSE WHO WILL NOT KNOW HIM.—THE
DREADFUL DOOM OF NEVER KNOWING GOD.

PHILOSOPHERS—some philosophers, I should say, have a very odd habit. When they come to anything which they do not know, they fancy that nobody else knows it—and declare it is “unknowable!” So when they have perplexed their brains about some matter, till they are fairly puzzled, they declare the thing is “unthinkable;” when all the while the matter which perplexes them may be perfectly thinkable, and knowable, and, in fact, very well known to most other persons. The simple reason is that they have put from them the means by which others have acquired their knowledge, and adopted some method of their own. These persons might know as well as other people if they would but use their common understanding, and listen to the instruction of those whom God has sent to teach them. “The phenomena of matter and force,” says Professor

Tyndall,¹ "lie within our intellectual range, and as far as they reach we will at all hazards push our inquiries. But behind, and above, and around all, the real mystery of the universe lies unsolved, and so far as we are concerned, is incapable of solution." This may be said in humility, lamenting the circumscribed limits of the philosopher's intellectual range, or it may imply that what is beyond these limits is unknown and unknowable.

Such philosophers as I have described declare that they do not know God and cannot know Him. God to them is "Unknown and Unknowable." I do not wonder it should be so. I do not see how it is likely that philosophers—*mere* philosophers who are nothing else, could expect to know God. They have no means of knowing Him, for they seek Him altogether in a wrong way. "The world by wisdom knows not God." Do they think that by the help of the telescope they can discern God seated on a throne above the clouds? or dwelling amongst the far off stars? Do they imagine that the microscope will reveal to them some subtle all-pervading substance which is God? Do they suppose that He is some yet undiscovered element, to be classed with carbon, or oxygen, or hydrogen, or ozone, or iodine—some gas, some metal? For these are the sort of things

¹ Fragments of Science, p. 93.

with which our modern philosophers are conversant—of the spiritual world they know nothing. “Some have not the knowledge of God; I speak this to your shame.” Or do they suppose that imagination will help them to discover the Great First Cause and Artificer of the Universe? Nay, they deny that there is any such being. All that imagination has yet taught them is, some fate or settled order of nature, not a being at all, or if he be so, yet so inert and helpless that it matters not whether he exist or not.

It is most true that the finite intellect of man cannot fully comprehend the Infinite God. To use an illustration which, inadequate as it is, may yet serve to explain the matter, the relation of God to His creatures is something like the relation of a parent to his children; a child knows that his parents love him, and take care of him, and provide for his wants and punish him if he is naughty, and that in some way he belongs to them; but he knows very little, next to nothing in fact, of what they really are, and what are their thoughts and occupations in this world. His father may be a great philosopher, whose occupation is to investigate the nature of distant worlds, or the mysteries of animal life. But of all this the child knows nothing. Or he may be a bishop, or a general officer, or a member of Parliament. But the child comprehends nothing

of all these things. Perhaps his father may be a surgeon, and have to cut off people's legs and arms, or perhaps he may be a judge and have to send people to prison, or order them for execution. All this would seem to the child very cruel when he is first told of it, simply because he is entirely ignorant of the real circumstances of the case. Just as though we know God as our Father and Preserver, we know comparatively little of His government of the universe, and some things appear to us inexplicable, perhaps even unjust.

I have often thought how impossible it is for us to know what is the real extent of the world of intellect. For all we know this world may be but one of millions of worlds, all of which but this one miserable world may have retained their allegiance to their great Creator, and have never fallen from righteousness. The amount of sin and misery in this earth is enormous in itself, but comparatively it may be as one of the stars in heaven compared with the multitude of the heavenly host. This poor world may be the only spot in creation where Satan is able to contend for the mastery over the souls of intelligent beings. And this is only one of the multitude of moral and spiritual circumstances relating to God's government, of which we are profoundly ignorant.

While admitting our ignorance of God in many parts of His infinite kingdom, and in respect to His eternal essence, still, in all that relates to ourselves, and our own duties and interests, it is very far from true to say that we know not God. How do we know any one—any one whom we have not seen face to face? We know him by his works, his character; we know him by the communications which we have had with him, and he with us, or by the report which others have brought of him.

First, we know God by report, or, as we should say, Revelation. Revelation, says the sceptic, with a sneer, I would not give much for the information derived from that source. But listen. Suppose there should be a great debate, as indeed there has been, whether the distant stars are inhabited worlds like ours or not. A great deal might be said by way of reasoning on both sides; but it is evident that no certainty could be obtained. The subject is not within our cognizance. But suppose a messenger were to come down from one of the stars and tell us, from his own knowledge, that it really was inhabited. Then clearly our only concern would be to make sure that the messenger had actually come from thence. Having ascertained that fact, we should receive on his authority what we could not possibly learn from any reasoning of our own. This would be faith.

The Christian by Revelation knows GOD to be the Maker of heaven and earth, and all that therein is. He knows that in the beginning GOD created the heaven and earth—that GOD said “Let there be light, and there was light”—that it was GOD Who made the sun to rule the day, and the moon to rule the night. He made the stars also—those wonderful orbs of light, and probably of life, which stud the heavens. He knows Who made them all, and maintains them in their course. He knows GOD as the Creator of all things living, Who breathed into man a living soul, and created him in His own image, and spake to him, and bade him be lord over the rest of creation. He knows him, also, as revealed in the New Covenant—the SAVIOUR and Redeemer of mankind. He knows Him as his Sanctifier and Comforter—the power by Whom alone he can live a life of righteousness and happiness. He knows, moreover, that He will come at the last day to be his Judge—that He has prepared a place for those who love and serve Him; and, alas! a place also for those who know Him not. What can we desire to know more of GOD; what could we expect to know that GOD has not revealed to us? What, with our present faculties, are we capable of knowing which GOD has not declared? The time, indeed, will come when those who have believed what GOD has revealed

to them now, will see God as He is, and know Him even as they are known. It is a great and glorious thought to believe that when this poor life is over we shall be admitted into the glorious presence of the Almighty, and behold all the wonders of His creation and government ; see, as He sees, the wonderful mechanism of the heavens, know what is the nature of the far-off stars, and the planets which form our system, whether they are habitable or no, what kind of beings dwell there: how it is that the sun pours forth its interminable stream of light and heat, and yet is not consumed, and what is scarcely less wonderful, discern the less than microscopic creatures which people this earth which we inhabit, and all the chemical agencies and forces which surround the elements of matter—and still more, the moral government of the great Ruler, how He controls the spiritual agency, whether of men and angels, and wields by His sole will the thoughts and actions of the beings whom He has made. All this insight into nature's greatest mysteries will be part of the reward of those who love God.

It has sometimes occurred to me what must be the blank disappointment of the sceptical philosopher who has forfeited his place in heaven, when he arrives at another world. He has been one who in this world has set his whole mind on scientific discoveries, enlarged, it may be, the knowledge of

his age—one who is admired and looked up to as foremost in his department. Up to the very last he has been engaged heart and soul in his favourite pursuit, but with little thought of his spiritual life, and prejudiced against the truth as it is in CHRIST. Some fatal accident, or a few days' illness, have cut short his career—his body is laid in the grave, his portrait, it may be, is given to the world—his biography written by some admiring disciple—and his spirit is departed—whither? I remember a short time ago it was recorded in the biography of some man of science—I am far from saying that his was the case which I have supposed—but one saying was recorded of him, that in the midst of health and life he had declared that he would willingly die that moment if he might be allowed to return to life some 500 years hence, and some one might be appointed to explain to him all the scientific discoveries which had been made in the meantime. One can well imagine that, perhaps, the greatest reward of the Christian philosopher, who in the eager pursuit of science, has not lost sight of his hope in CHRIST, one of the greatest rewards imaginable in another world would be to be made acquainted with the wonders of creation—to have many things made clear to him, which in this world he had vainly endeavoured to discover, and, above all, to know God as He is. And if one can well

imagine the joy and gratitude which the discovery of nature's great secrets would be to the philosopher who believed in CHRIST, what must be the abject despair of the sceptic or unbeliever, who with the same high philosophical aspirations, found, when he awoke from the grave, that, for his sin and unbelief, he had forfeited all hope of increasing his knowledge, and was condemned to remain in doubt and darkness for ever.

I can imagine a case, which in some slight degree might illustrate the misery of such an one. Suppose that two hundred years ago there lived in France a statesman high in position, whose whole heart and soul were occupied in State intrigues and policy—one able to guide the helm of the State, and influence the affairs of nations. In an evil hour this man has committed himself, we will say, to some treasonable affair, has been discovered, arrested, and thrown into the Bastile for life. Perhaps "the man with the iron mask" may have been such an one. He is shut up within the narrow walls of a dungeon, where scarce a ray of light finds entrance. Perhaps a single gleam slowly traverses the wall of his prison each day, making the darkness only more visible. For weary days and nights he wears out his monotonous existence. His keeper brings him his daily food, but speaks no word in answer to his eager inquiries—he can obtain no information respect-

ing the outer world. All the schemes in which his mind was formerly so deeply interested have passed as a shadow—to him they are as though they never had been. He hears the crowd passing by his prison walls, sometimes he notes the march of armed men—sometimes the shout of the multitude which once greeted him as he passed—his restless mind perplexes itself to discover the meaning of the sounds he hears—but to no avail. Days, months, and years pass on. At last the interests of the world gradually die away—he comes to acknowledge that to him they are as nothing—the pageantry of the world has passed away.

Something like this we may conceive to be the case of the scientific infidel, cast into outer darkness, debarred for his sin from taking further interest in the pursuits in which his soul delighted. Only in one point the parallel holds not. The politician doomed to pass his life in a dungeon, excluded from the interests of the world, may set his mind on higher things, and for CHRIST's sake obtain pardon in heaven. The sceptic who has died in his unbelief is doomed for ever to a fate of everlasting ignorance. God was unknown to him in this life, and will remain unknowable for ever.

It is a strange notion to exhort philosophers to believe in God, and serve Him, in order that after

this life they may be admitted to a knowledge of all the deep mysteries of nature which now perplex them ; yet I know not that any motive is to be rejected which might draw men to God. Certainly the fear of being shut out for ever from all hope in advancing in the path of science, may well be classed among the terrors of the LORD, and the certainty of such a result of a course of sin and unbelief seems undeniable.

I will end my chapter with one of Chalmers' splendid passages. "Oh, it is a deeply interesting spectacle to behold a man, who can take a masterly and commanding survey over the field of some human speculation ; who can clear his discriminated way through all the turns and ingenuities of human argument ; who by the march of mighty and restless demonstrations, can scale with assured footsteps the sublimities of science, and from the firm stand on the eminence he has won, can descry some wondrous range of natural or intellectual truth spread out in subordination before him. And yet this very man may, in reference to the moral and authoritative claims of the Godhead, be in a state of utter apathy and blindness ! All his attempts, either at the spiritual discernment, or the practical impression of this doctrine, may be arrested and baffled by the weight of some inexplicable impotency. A man of homely talents, and still homelier education,

may see what *he* cannot see, and feel what *he* cannot feel ; and wise and prudent as he is, there may lie the barrier of an obstinate and impenetrable concealment, between his accomplished mind, and those things which are revealed unto babes.”¹

¹ See “Discourses on Christian Revelation viewed in connection with Modern Astronomy,” p. 247.

CHAPTER XV.

**GOD IS LIGHT AND LOVE.—WITHOUT GOD AS OUR LIGHT
THE SPIRITUAL WORLD WOULD BE LIKE THE MATERIAL
WORLD WITHOUT THE SUN.**

THE astronomers of ancient days, although they had not invented telescopes, yet made no inconsiderable advance in science—albeit entirely on a wrong principle. The system of astronomy most in vogue was the Ptolemaic system. The astronomers of those times did not know that the sun was the centre of the planetary system; at least, they did not believe it, though Pythagoras had taught it long before. The earth was in their view the chief object in creation. They fancied that it was a vast immoveable horizontal plain, and that the sun moved upwards in the heavens, as it seems to move each morning, and went down at evening below the western horizon; and the moon and the planets (for they were very accurate observers) appeared to them to perform certain cycles and epicycles in the heavens, which they noted down with the greatest precision. More-

over, they invented the signs of the zodiac, and mapped out the heavens in a number of constellations, to which they gave fantastic names, the Great Bear, the Little Bear, Orion, Capricorn—most of which for convenience' sake have been retained in the present day. They were even able to calculate eclipses, and, in fact, made astonishingly clever attempts at explaining the revolutions of the heavenly bodies. But they were all wrong; and that, simply because they did not know that the sun was the true centre of the system. At last Copernicus taught them the solution. Thenceforth with the sun for their centre, all the various motions of the earth, the moon and planets, were developed in due order, and are seen to constitute one vast majestic whole.

And it is remarkable that the very discovery of the grandeur of the heavenly system, has but served to show us our own littleness. Instead of the earth being, as was before supposed, the greatest object of creation, and all the heavenly host created to be subservient to us, we find that we are but a speck, as it were, in the ocean of infinity.

Thus the sun is the greatest material power in our planetary system. And so in the moral universe, God is the sun of our system from which all spiritual light is evolved, and not light only, but all spiritual force, and power, and motion. God is the centre of the great moral and intel-

lectual universe—moving, directing, enlightening all things. To construct a theory of human affairs, a system of ethics or philosophy, and to ignore the moving and enlightening powers of God, is like going back to the Ptolemaic system of astronomy, and supposing the earth to be the centre of the universe. No doubt many clever guesses might be made by persons holding such a theory—just as the ancient astronomers, considering their ignorance of the moving principle, made many ingenious calculations. But such notions would be vague and erratic; such a system barren and imperfect. The moral world would be to these modern atheists one great flat. Philosophers who held this notion might, no doubt, calculate and trace a good many of the common operations of the human mind, and the course of human events, as the old astronomers traced the course of the planets on their imperfect hypothesis: they might trace the progress of civilization, or imagine they had traced it—how science grew up, and art, and culture. Ignorant of the existence of a great and beneficent Creator, they might imagine the state of the world when men were developed out of monkeys, and began to make flint-heads to arrows, and lived in mud cabins, and how they advanced from the mud cabin to the castle and the palace, from skins of beasts for their clothing to silks and cottons.

They might form their speculations, and suppose some law of nature by which these things progressed. Shrewd guesses, too, they might make as to the probable course of human events—just as the old astronomers made their cycles and epicycles. But without the light of God's Providence all would be vague, doubtful, and misty. The origin, the true position, and final destiny of man would be an enigma to them without God—mere random guess-work or laborious drivelling. God is the true central power of human affairs, the light of the moral, as the sun is of the material world. What a tangled and perplexing scene is this world, what cycles and endless epicycles are there if we eliminate from it the central moving power of God's Providence, ruling and directing all things.

Thus, as the sun is the centre of light and heat to the visible world—so to the moral world, to the nations and families of the world "God is light." "God is love." It is a bold thing for us to speak of the nature and essence of the great Eternal Spirit, the Ruler of heaven and earth, but under the guidance of the Inspired Word we may at least gather some portion of this mysterious truth. What then is the nature of God? "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." "In Him we live, and move, and have our being." Again, "God

is love," and yet again, "Our GOD is a consuming fire." How is this? How can He Whose essence is love be also a consuming fire? Even as the sun which is the fountain of genial warmth—can scorch, and burn up, and destroy. GOD is indeed a GOD of love to those who love and obey Him. His love is infinite. "In this was manifested the love of GOD towards us, in that He sent His Only-Begotten SON into the world, that we might live by Him." "Herein is love, not that we loved GOD, but that He loved us, and sent His SON to be the propitiation for our sins." Is it possible to conceive greater love than this? GOD loves us all, He desires to raise each one of us to be with Him for ever in glory. He has done everything that could be done, even in the sacrifice of His dear SON. But if we reject His love—if we continue in sin and hard-hearted unbelief, and refuse to listen to His voice of kindness—then "our GOD is a consuming fire."

Again, GOD is light. This attribute of GOD, if it be an attribute, and not, as love, the essence of His nature, appears to include not only infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, but the idea also of clearness, beauty, glory, intelligence, all the highest graces of the intellect. GOD is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. What the light of the sun is to the visible world, that is GOD to the spiritual. Imagine the world without light,

wrapped in a mantle of gloom and darkness, as it was in times of old before the habitation of man was prepared, when the earth was without form, and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep. Then, we read, "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, and God said, 'Let there be light : ' and there was light." Picture to yourselves the change which at that word took place. Earth, and sky, and sea lit up with the new creation. What just before was dull, and dead, and lifeless, is now clothed in varied colours reflected from sea, and cloud, and azure sky. And such as light is to the material world, such is God to the world of spirits. Without Him, without the grace of His Spirit, all is gloomy, and desolate, and dark. But when the Spirit of God has breathed upon man's moral nature, then spring up all the graces of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, gentleness, meekness, charity, all the noble virtues which adorn the spirit of man ; all the amiable and gentle qualities which warm the heart—faith, hope, charity ; all these spring from the presence of God, Who is the light of the soul—the centre and origin of all that is good and lovely.

And God is light in that He is the source and centre of all intelligence—all the multiplied attainments of the human intellect derive their power from Him, and are exercised on the objects

which He has created. And yet there are those who imagine that this world could go on without the intervention of a personal God, and would eliminate God from His own creation! You might as well take away the sun from the centre of the planetary system. Not more vague and irregular would be the system in which we live, robbed of its central sun, than would be the course of the moral world without God as its Prime Mover and Controller.

God is light, the Light of the world, in that His revealed Truth is the grand source of all our knowledge of spiritual things. Through many ages of spiritual darkness in which the nations of the earth were immersed, yea even civilized and philosophical nations, not only was the true God unknown, but men were given over to horrible crimes and vile affections,—in all this time there was one people, the chosen people of God, amongst whom the true God was known, and many holy men lived and died whose inspired writings even now shed light and life amongst us. The Psalms of David, the Proverbs of Solomon, the sublime effusions of the old Prophets far surpass the moral and spiritual effusions of the rest of the ancient world. It is a strange thing that out of the ignorance of those early days, a nation should spring up like that of Israel, which should in many things be acknowledged as the instructor

and schoolmaster of the civilized nations of modern Europe. Yet so it was.

Then in the fulness of the time came CHRIST into the world, "the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

We cannot tell why it was that GOD so long delayed the coming of His SON—unless it was to prove how incapable was man, even when advanced in intellectual cultivation, to attain to moral excellence without direct communication from the source of light. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of GOD, even to them that believe in His name."

The Gospel of CHRIST specially reveals to us GOD as a GOD of love—not only of purity and holiness, but of mercy and loving-kindness. When we read of the state of society amongst the most civilized nations of antiquity, when we think of the ancient Romans with all their grandeur gloating over the cruel sports of the amphitheatre, watching the life-blood flowing from the breast of the dying gladiator, when we think of the grossness of their lives, cruelty, and impurity, not less shocking than that which called down fire from heaven on the cities of the plain, we can discern that mere intellectual culture alone had no efficacy to soften the heart, or promote purity and holiness. The doctrine of CHRIST, and the kindly, gentle influence which He diffused

among the nations might indeed be called light springing up in darkness.

There are those who attribute the greater refinement of men's manners in the present day to civilization. Yes, but they forget that modern civilization is in truth the offspring of Christianity. But for Christianity we should be no better than the old Romans, proud, cruel, inexorable, savage in heart, however refined and noble in manner. It is Christianity which has introduced those gentle, heavenly graces which, in those who truly receive them, are able to subdue the gross and violent passions of the human heart, and render them gentle and holy.

Never was there a greater mistake than to suppose that any real contrast exists between the pure Christian faith, and the attainments of modern civilization and science. Why should not the man of science be a Christian? Why should not the Christian be a man of science? Oh, let us not imagine that there is any antagonism between the God of nature, and the God of Revelation. Let us believe that God is light and love in the natural as in the spiritual world, and only strive with each other which shall render Him the worthiest homage. It is sin and unbelief that separate us from the God of light and love—irreligion, impurity, unbelief, worldliness. These are truly works of darkness—they wrap the soul

in gloom, shut out the brightness of God's presence, intercept the rays of divine love, make men hard, and cruel, and selfish. Let us put from us these works of darkness and walk as children of light. Then shall we learn to see Him as He is, and discern the beauty of His holiness, and appreciate the infinity of His love. Then will all His ways appear to us holy, just, and good,—doubts and difficulties will disappear from our vision, and we shall know Him as a God of light and love. Some there are who positively hate the Gospel of CHRIST,—the proud, the self-willed, who cannot bear to be controlled and thwarted,—those who are living in known sin which the Gospel tells them that they must give up, but they will not; those who see with envy its influences; those who feel that they have wilfully excluded themselves from the pale of its blessings. Alas! to them the Gospel is no blessing. The light is shining around them, but they choose darkness rather than light; the bright fountain of living water flows freely, but they will not drink of it; the Bread of Life is prepared for them, but they will not eat of it. They are starving in the midst of plenty, groveling in darkness while light is shining around.

Others there are to whom the blessed Gospel is an atmosphere of light shining round about them, in the midst of a dark and dreary world.

Is it not a glorious privilege to live in the sunshine of God's light and love,—to know God as our FATHER, JESUS CHRIST as our Redeemer, the HOLY GHOST as our Sanctifier? Is it not a blessed privilege to enter God's House, to know that He is there to hear us, to have no doubt that He is listening to us, as we pour forth our praises and supplications? All these things the faithful see, and hear, and are sure of. The eye of faith discerns things spiritual, as the natural eye discerns material things, and has no doubt about them, any more than when we see the sun shining in his splendour. As in ancient days the Egyptians were plagued with a darkness which might be felt, while the children of Israel had light in their dwellings, so it is now; the worldly and the wicked see nothing of the glory of spiritual things, they grope about in darkness—a gross oppressive darkness which entangles them in its folds, and limits their sight to the world's narrow horizon, beyond which all is gloomy and undefined. God, and the things of God, are to them “unknown and unknowable,” while the children of light, walking in the sunshine of the Gospel of light and love, enjoy the continual light of God's countenance,—know that He is looking down upon them, and loveth them as a father loveth his children.

CHAPTER XVI.

**GOD'S PROVIDENCE.—MANY THINGS DIFFICULT TO UNDER-
STAND.—WE SEE ONLY IN PART, AND TRUST TO GOD'S
WISDOM AND GOODNESS.**

THERE are many semi-religious, semi-philosophical questions which arise in the minds of those who think on the state of the world. Some are beyond our present understanding, and must remain undecided till we enter upon another state of existence. Some are not so difficult. It perplexes many persons to see so much evil, and unhappiness, and injustice as exists all around us in the world. They are at a loss to know why all this should be suffered. To mere philosophers it is natural enough that such difficulties should arise. They have not any principle to account for what they see. But the Christian has no misgivings about it. The Christian believes in the absolute power of the Almighty as Ruler of the universe. He believes that everything is ordered by God's absolute Will, and yet that God *can* do nothing unjust. How is this? It

is impossible that He should oppress or deal unkindly with His people, because not only is His power absolute, but also His goodness and His wisdom are infinite. His absolute goodness prevents Him from doing wrong or injustice in His government of His people, and His absolute Wisdom insures His doing what is right. Hence the Christian has no doubts or misgivings in regard to the government of the affairs of the world ; he feels sure that all is in the hands of an Almighty, all-wise, and all-merciful God and FATHER, who will distribute justice throughout His dominion. There may be many things in the affairs of the world which the Christian cannot account for—many things in the Bible which appear difficult to comprehend—many things in history which are beyond his understanding—nay, many things actually existing which are full of perplexity. But believing, or rather knowing, that there is a divine and holy Providence ruling over all, he is not disturbed or doubtful. He is fully persuaded that all things work together for eventual good.

The objector will say, If God has absolute power over all things in the world, why does He not annihilate and stamp out the evil which exists ? The answer is, that this evil arises from man's liberty of action. It is impossible to stamp out the evil without destroying the free

will of man, or man himself. God did once stamp out the evil when He destroyed one whole generation by the waters of the flood. Would we desire that He should continually from time to time destroy the world in like manner? It matters not whether we think it would be best or not. He has declared that He will not again destroy the world until the last great day. And meanwhile by the most wondrous exhibition of mingled power and goodness He seeks to bring back His erring sons to their allegiance.

But there are some passages of Holy Scripture in which God seems to have permitted or even encouraged wrong doing. The answer to this difficulty is not far to seek. God never causes sinfulness in man; He allows the use of free will to all, and He uses the sinfulness and evil passion of wicked men for His good purposes. And these are chiefly two: first, to punish other evil doers; secondly, to try the spirit of His saints and bring them to greater excellence. How many instances might be quoted in which the sinfulness and evil passions of wicked men have been employed for the punishment of other wicked men. God did not make Nebuchadnezzar a tyrant and an oppressor, but He made use of his tyranny to punish His people who had rebelled against Him. God did not make Judas treacherous and covetous, nor Pontius Pilate unjust and timeserving;

but He availed Himself of the evil qualities of these men to accomplish His great design for the salvation of mankind. There are a thousand instances in the Bible in which the Almighty Ruler thus makes use of the sinfulness of man, whether to accomplish His judgments on the wicked, or to try the constancy of His saints, or otherwise work out the designs of His good Providence; just as he might employ a lion, or a whirlwind, or drought, or pestilence. And surely we can see the same Providence still working in these our days. God did not cause the political jealousies between the Northern and Southern states of America, but He employed their evil passions to work out the emancipation of three or four millions of slaves. He did not put into the hearts of the Communists of Paris the furious and evil passions by which they were actuated; but employed their violence to chastise a luxurious and immoral people, and to afford warning to other nations, if they will but heed it. So, now it is not God who has caused the covetousness and self-will which prevails amongst us in England, nor the infidelity and atheism with which our unhappy land is infested; yet it is well if He do not make these evil qualities the instruments of His Providence to punish and chastise us.

Some persons are disturbed by the fulfilment

of prophecy. They imagine that if God brings to pass the prophecies which He has caused His servants to deliver, He must needs be the author of the crimes and violence by which in many cases the prophecies were fulfilled. But this is to take a wrong view of the matter. God may foresee what will happen, and yet not be the cause of it. Even we ourselves may often foresee the course which events will take—or the mode in which men will act. If we know the character of a man, we may be able to predict with tolerable accuracy how he will act under given circumstances. We can tell how he will vote. We can predict whether he will act nobly or meanly, honestly or dishonestly. But seeing that God has a perfect knowledge of what is in man, and of all the circumstances in which he will be placed, He is able to foresee with certainty what will be the course of events, and that without interfering with them, but simply suffering the will of man to have its way. At the same time, as we have already seen, it is perfectly compatible with the justice and goodness of God to avail Himself of the will and actions of men to bring to pass the events of His good providence.

And amongst all the troubles and evils of the present world there is one certain fact on which the Christian takes his stand, and from which he derives a settled confidence. Not only has he a

perfect faith in the goodness and wisdom of God—but he believes and knows with a knowledge as certain as anything can be known that this life and all that we see around us in this present world is a part only, and a comparatively small part of the dispensation of God's Providence. There is a world to come in which the inequalities and injustice, and evil which exist here will all be remedied and set right. He has not the slightest doubt that they who fear the LORD will have a happy portion hereafter; joy in heaven which will abundantly compensate for all the trials of this life. In this respect the Christian has an immense advantage over the unbeliever. The vision of the unbeliever is limited to the narrow horizon of the present world. His philosophy is circumscribed within the straitest bounds. He lacks the clue to all that is noblest and most intellectual. The mere philosopher is conversant with nothing nobler or more important than the material universe with its component parts. He is altogether ignorant of the world of spirits—of the spiritual state of man, his capacities and powers. Think only of the astonishing truths with which the Christian is conversant, from the revelation of Scripture and from the writings of the ablest men of the last eighteen hundred years, who have devoted the whole faculties of their souls to the elucidation of the ways of God to

man. Why, the very poorest man who has been educated at a village school, and has attended his church regularly, really knows more of the highest truths of intellectual and spiritual life than the greatest philosopher whose days have been spent amidst the wonders of natural science, but who is ignorant of Spiritual Truth. It is admitted on all hands that in the present age science has reached a point of development far higher than any which the world had before arrived at. It must necessarily be so : because the discoveries of one age serve as the foundation on which to build an ever-increasing fabric. Sometimes indeed a theory, which has been confidently asserted, is found to be without foundation. Perhaps some which at present occupy the minds of philosophers may be found to be of this character. Such theories of course are set aside by increased knowledge. But speaking generally the present generation stands on a lofty eminence of scientific knowledge. But after all what is the value of this knowledge, if they who have acquired it do at the same time let slip the knowledge of God—of Spiritual Truth ? It is well to know the revolution of the planets and the mechanism of distant worlds, but what is that in comparison with the knowledge of the great Architect of the universe ? It is well to know the forces of nature, and the structure of the animal frame, and all the vast

variety of organic matter ; but what is this when compared with the world of spirits, the method of God's dealing with the souls of men, the way in which we may render an acceptable service to our Maker, our Redeemer, our Sanctifier ? What wonderful depths and heights of knowledge are comprised in the Revelation which God has given us of His Will, His Nature, His Attributes—the combination of justice and mercy with which He deals with the souls of men. Surely all this is infinitely beyond any possible discovery in the realm of mere material science ! We may surely say with Venerable Bede—

“ Qui Christum noscit sat scit si cætera nescit :

Qui Christum nescit nil scit si cætera nescit.”¹

But after all why not know both ? There is no real antagonism between the knowledge of God and of His works : nay, rather the Christian philosopher who knows God and His works is the only true philosopher.

¹ Quoted from the *Guardian*, May 29th, 1873.

CHAPTER XVII.

**THE SUPERNATURAL.—MAN A PROOF OF GOD'S UNBOUNDED
POWER.—THE OMNIPRESENCE OF GOD.—PROTEST AGAINST
CLASSING MODERN MIRACLES WITH THE MIRACLES OF
THE GOSPEL.**

It is difficult to understand how clever men, or even men of common sense can imagine that it is according to reason to deny the existence of the supernatural in the face of the testimony by which the occurrence of supernatural events has been substantiated. The only argument is, that they themselves have never witnessed any supernatural occurrence. It reminds one of the man who was accused of some misdemeanour and informed that several witnesses had seen him do what he was accused of. "For every witness," said he, "that says he saw me do it, I can bring forward a dozen that did not see me." Surely philosophers must know that it is impossible to prove a negative in the face of many positive witnesses of a fact. If twelve men declare that they saw with their own eyes the supernatural works of our LORD, it matters not how many did not see Him, or do not

think them probable. You may have a strong opinion that a thing is not likely: but if the fact is proved, your *a priori* opinion goes for nothing.

A distinction should be drawn, though it is not easy always to maintain it—between the supernatural and the preternatural. The supernatural is something above the actually constituted order of nature—the preternatural is something beyond or contrary to it. The supernatural is the authority which God exercises over nature whether to establish or control it—the preternatural is something different from God's supernatural government—the miraculous in fact.

Now it is self-evident that there have been many very great deviations from the original state of things. No one supposes that the world has been going on just as it is from eternity. There must have been a beginning, and if so, there must have been some power which first set in motion what we now see around us, and the act of doing so must have been supernatural, that is, something above the state of things which then existed. Once there was a time when all the things which we see did not exist. So far all agree. As S. Paul says: "By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that those things which are seen, were not made of things which do appear." But the creation of the rude materials of this visible world was of

less marvellous character than the creation of the various accessories which we see about it—light, heat, electricity, gravitation, chemical affinity—all the apparatus for causing rain, and wholesome atmosphere, and the growth of vegetation, and the variety of circumstances which are necessary for the sustentation of life. And then came the still greater work of peopling the earth with living inhabitants, when the sea, the air, the earth, were all made to teem with animal life, which did not before exist. And lastly, God created man in His own image, endowed with moral sense, reason, and immortality. The very bringing into existence of what we consider now to be perfectly natural, yet must have been at first a supernatural act. Even the creation of a monad would be a supernatural act, and involve the potentiality of any number of future supernatural acts. It is obvious that the Power which could first make a monad from which creation was to be evolved, might have made all the same creatures at several times, and not only an original monad. In fact, it seems a great deal more difficult to conceive the creation of this wonderful monad, than to believe in the creation of separate creatures. To many minds the monad would be simply “unthinkable.”

If there be one fact more clearly established than another by the discoveries of modern science

it is that the earth existed for a vast period of time before man lived upon it. In truth, it was for many ages in such a state of rudeness and confusion that man could not have lived if he had been placed in it. The discoveries of science agree remarkably with the description of the earth when it was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the waters. How could man live without light? God first made the materials of the world, then prepared it for man to live upon it, then created him to be its lord and master. And whenever He created him, and however, if, as some philosophers say, He made him out of a gorilla, it must have been by a supernatural act. This one fact, the creation of man with his wonderful and fearful structure, not of body only but of mind, his power of reasoning, his capacity for goodness; this one fact, if there were not a thousand others, proves to us beyond a question, that there is a great and mighty and intelligent Spirit Who controls the universe, and governs it according to His good will; and though it may be true as a general rule that things go on in a regular settled order—an order settled and appointed by Him—yet that He has the power, as He has shown also that He has the will, to deviate from the settled order of things, and do what is supernatural, even to the extent of creating the visible universe, and

so wonderful a creature as man, appears self-evident.

It would seem then that the creation of man was the great object and design of God's previous arrangement—that the world was originally created, and afterwards prepared for man's use, and that, so far at least as the system of this one planet is concerned, everything was designed and constituted in order that it should be the habitation and trial place of man.

It is evident also that He Who created could also destroy. Man even can destroy what he has made. He who builds a house can pull it down; he who plants a tree can root it up. It is unquestionable therefore that God can change or re-arrange or modify as He chooses what He has created. The records which we have of God's miraculous dispensations have no improbability whatever on the score of lack of power on God's part to do what He will with what He has created. And as man was the great object of creation, so far as we are cognisant of it, so man is the great object of the different dispensations by which God has wrought changes in His work. If God did, as we are assured, place man in Paradise in order that he might enjoy happiness so long as he was obedient to His law, we can easily understand and appreciate God's motive for interference when, on man's disobedience He

drove him from his blest abode, and placed him in scenes where he could eat bread in the sweat of his face. We can understand why, when many generations of men had arisen, and God saw that the wickedness of man was great upon the earth, and every imagination of his heart was only evil continually, He should resolve to destroy that evil generation by the waters of a Deluge. I see not that there is the least improbability in the account which we have of this great event. The improbability would be if the Mighty Power which first made the universe and man did *not* interfere in its concerns. The creation of the world, the placing of such a being as man upon it, proves the existence of an Almighty and All-wise Creator, with power and intelligence to accomplish whatsoever He wills. When therefore the creatures of His hand to whom He has given such high endowments, dared to rebel against Him, what is there strange or incredible in the course of His proceedings which is recorded?

If it be asked *how* it is that God causes supernatural results? the answer is simple. He is Himself altogether and essentially supernatural, He is bound by no laws of nature. He may do what He will by the mere word of His mouth which is mighty in operation, or He may use the services of innumerable angels which surround

His throne. We know not *how* it is, but this we know from our common understanding, that He Who first created the universe, and established the laws by which it is governed, must needs, by the exercise of the same power, be able to change or to destroy it.

The mere existence of such a being as man necessarily involves the existence of a Creator and Preserver. When we consider his high intellectual endowments and capabilities, it is incredible that he should have grown up out of inert or unintelligent matter without the intervention of a superior intelligence, first to conceive, then to create him. And when we see his lamentable moral weakness, it seems equally improbable that there should be no one, so to speak, to look after him, to help and to guide him, in one word, a Providence. It seems to me a puerile idea either that the great world and all that is in it came into existence without the intervention of a great and beneficent Creator, or that having made the world, its Creator should neglect to govern it with His wisdom. All real philosophy is based on the great truth that God is everywhere present guiding and controlling the work which He has made. "The eyes of the LORD are in every place beholding the evil and the good." "The very hairs of our head are all numbered, and without Him not a sparrow fall-

eth to the ground." "Can any one hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? Do I not fill heaven and earth?"

God's Omnipresence is perhaps the grandest idea not only of religion but of philosophy. His all-seeing eye is over us watching us with anxious care, about our path by day, and about our bed by night, to guard, protect and bless us. He watches with benevolent interest to see how we employ the existence which He has given us, how we cultivate our reason, and control our high powers and affections and faculties which He has bestowed. He is grieved if He sees the creatures of His hand abusing His excellent gifts, just as a good father grieves for the misconduct of a beloved son. And when He sees that we desire to please Him, imperfect though our attempts may be, He views them with kind indulgence, and helps our infirmities, and sustains our faltering steps. This may be anthropomorphism, but it is all the same a blessed and a holy truth.

But still deeper and holier is the feeling if we go on to consider the peculiar doctrines of the Christian faith. CHRIST dwelling by His Spirit in the hearts of His children. Our hearts the very temples of the HOLY GHOST. Yes, He is very near to those who are His. His Spirit mingles with theirs. We are one with Him, and He with us.

But I will not here enter into the deep mysteries of CHRIST. This is not the time and place. I have only now alluded to them that any one who reads may judge which is noblest, holiest, truest, the Church's doctrine of the supernatural Omnipresence of GOD, and the indwelling of His Spirit, and union of the SAVIOUR; or the notion that man grew up out of a monad without a Creator, and lives and dies without a SAVIOUR.

P.S.—I must protest against the classing such so-called supernatural events as the vision of Marie Marguerite Alacoque at Paray le Monial with the miracles of the New Testament. The latter are attested by many witnesses who laid down their lives in testimony of their sincerity, the other rests only on the unsupported testimony of an apparently hysterical woman. To attempt to class one with the other is on the face of it an entirely unfair and illogical proceeding.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PERSONALITY OF THE EVIL ONE.—PHILOSOPHERS UNABLE TO EXPLAIN THE MATTER.—THE BIBLE DECLARES IT.

ONE of the subjects on which philosophers differ in opinion from divines is the existence of a personal Evil Spirit—the devil, or Satan. It is unfortunate that even good persons, who believe the Bible, sometimes allow themselves to speak in a bantering tone on the subject, and regard the devil as an object of ridicule, rather than of dread and aversion. Certainly if his power and malice be such as the Bible teaches us, he is no object of contempt. Let us treat the subject with gravity.

First, divines and philosophers must all admit with grief that there is an immense mass of sin, and evil, and mischief of all sorts in the world. There can be no question about it: so far we are all agreed.

Well, then, how came the evil to exist? Will philosophers be so good as to explain to us? They are unable to do so. Can divines explain it? Yes, so far, at least, as the existence of evil

in this earth ; the Revelation which GOD has given for our instruction explains it fully. It tells us first that our first parents were created in the image of GOD, that is, as Christians believe, holy, intellectual, free. The philosopher, perhaps, will demur to this statement, and either discard it altogether, or admit it only as a myth or allegory. However, it is impossible to deny that the first rational and responsible beings must some time or other have come into existence. How came these beings to fall into sin, and to give birth to a race of beings like themselves ? The philosopher has no explanation to give ; the divine simply tells the sad tale which the Bible unfolds. Let us see whether it is a probable account. We accept it, indeed, as true on the authority of GOD's Word, and that is enough for us. Still, it is well to endeavour to remove any difficulties which may present themselves to the mind of the philosopher.

Let us consider what is the precise point in question. It is the existence of a personal being, called the Devil or Satan. The question is not now as to his taking the form of a serpent. Some may accept the fact literally ; some may regard it as an allegory. It is not logical to say, I do not believe in the transformation of Satan into a serpent, and, therefore, I do not believe that the first created responsible beings were tempted by a personal fiend. We have to consider whether

the fact of the devil tempting our first parents to sin is in accordance with our general experience.

To me it appears that nothing is more probable. It seems irrational to suppose that man would of himself have rebelled against his Maker, Who had been so kind and bountiful to him, and given him the enjoyment of so many blessings. We are led to conclude that he must have acted by the instigation of some malevolent being, not himself. It is a shocking characteristic of evil beings—the desire to lead others into sin. Drunkards are always trying to entice others to join with them in their revels. Impure persons try to turn others to the same sin. Unbelievers and sceptics seem to take a malicious pleasure, or perhaps have a sort of curse laid on them, to be always endeavouring to bring others into the same unhappy state, and often exercise a cunning and audacity which prove too successful. So it was with Satan. The account of his proceeding is strictly according to our every-day experience. No sooner did he see our first parents dwelling in happiness amidst the bowers of Paradise, than he resolved to compass their ruin. By his wily speech he persuaded Eve that she might eat of the forbidden fruit, and yet not surely die—yea, rather that her intellectual vision would be enlarged, and she would become as God, knowing good and evil. So he deceived her and she fell.

Even if we believe these things to be wrapped in allegory, still they are so wonderfully true to nature, so exactly in accordance with what we see around us every day of the proceedings of the agents of evil, that we feel sure that they must be records of something real.

There is a remarkable passage in the first chapter of the Book of Job in which the transactions of the court of heaven are in a manner unfolded to our view. No one who looks deeply into the present system of the world can fail to discern that in the midst of this wonderful scene, whether we regard the natural or moral aspect of the world, while there is abundant evidence of the power and goodness of the great Ruler of heaven and earth, there are at the same time manifest indications of an Evil Spirit going up and down in the earth, marring God's work, spoiling man's happiness, and inflicting on him miseries innumerable. "There was a day," we read, "when the sons of God came to present themselves to the LORD, and Satan came also among them. And the LORD said unto Satan, 'Whence comest thou?' And Satan answered the LORD, 'From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.' And the LORD said unto Satan, 'Hast thou considered My servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one who feareth God and escheweth

evil?" And Satan answered the LORD, 'Doth Job serve God for nought?' " This is a wonderful passage. Be it an allegory or not, it conveys to us a clear and forcible representation of the superintending Providence of God, of the vigilance with which He takes cognizance of the different works assigned to His holy angels, the control which He exercises over the Power of darkness, and the limits which He assigns to his evil doings. In short, we see a noble picture of the LORD Omnipotent sitting on the Throne of His government, and summoning before Him in Person the powers of heaven and hell to give account of all that they have done.

And observe, there are not, as the ancient Magi and the Manicheans taught, two independent principles, the one of good and the other of evil. God is supreme over every other spirit. His Will is absolute. Nothing can be done in the wide universe that is not brought under the eye of the Almighty Ruler. The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good. Satan is always represented as in an inferior position, not as contending on an equality with God for the mastery of the world, and dominion over the souls of men, but acting in subordination to Him, and performing only such acts as God for His own wise purpose permits.

But far in wonder beyond the records of these

temptations which we have already considered, is that marvellous narrative, the temptation by the Devil in person of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. How Satan could have dared to tempt One so holy; how he could have, for a moment, imagined that he could possibly succeed, appears to us inconceivable. The difficulty is partly answered by the observation of Origen, that though JESUS CHRIST, the SON of GOD, was incapable of sin, yet that Satan did not certainly know Him at that time to be so; he viewed Him only as one of like passions with the rest of human beings, and had not learned to know and to fear Him as the SON of GOD, until his defeated machinations convinced him of the truth.

The temptations with which Satan assailed our LORD exhibit an exact type or representation of those to which mankind are liable.

With regard to these temptations with which Satan assailed our LORD, as well as those which Job resisted, and those under which our first parents fell, there are those, as I have said, who regard them not as actual events, but as allegories and myths; not, indeed, without foundation, but still as not to be taken in their strictly literal sense; and some do not believe them at all. It is one of the special temptations of the devil in the present day that men fancy they have attained such knowledge that they will not believe any-

thing which they cannot understand, at least, in spiritual things. One would have thought that the present state of philosophical and scientific knowledge *ought* to have had exactly the contrary effect, namely, to convince men of their ignorance, rather than their knowledge, for surely if science has taught us anything, it has taught us the narrow limits of our poor capacity when compared with the infinity of God's work. And if the visible and material universe transcends our power of comprehension, how much less are we able to comprehend the mysteries of the invisible world. "Hardly do we guess aright at things that are upon earth, and with labour do we find the things that are before us, but the things that are in heaven who hath searched out?"¹

With respect, however, to the special subject of our consideration—the existence of the Devil—the extent of his power, the mode of his operation, and other questions relating to him, there is one consideration which must practically set aside further cavil. It seems to be tacitly assumed by some that if we view the notices in the Bible about the temptation of the Devil, such, I mean, as those which I have mentioned, as figurative only and symbolical; we do, in some degree, rid ourselves of the apprehension and dread with which the power of so subtle and inveterate an enemy

¹ Wisdom ix. 16.

must fill us. But if we consider the matter we must acknowledge that what is recorded does but set before us in vivid character the very facts which our own daily experience teaches us. We do in no way mend the matter by regarding them as myths, because they represent to us facts and principles to the truth of which our own conscience and experience must bear witness. That there is an evil personal agent who tempts us to sin we believe on the authority of GOD'S Word, but it comes to much the same practically, whether the Devil is but the symbol of man's corrupt nature. I do not, for a moment, admit that such is the case. I only say that the sceptic gains nothing by denying the personal agency of Satan in the affairs of men.

We read with admiration Milton's glorious conception of the war in heaven between the powers of good and evil—light and darkness. We know that much of these wondrous pictures is but the product of the poet's imagination. We acknowledge the powerlessness of the human mind to conceive in their details all the accompaniments of this great contest. Still not the less every consideration shows us that there is a real conflict going forward in this world between good and evil, and that the heart of man is the battle-field on which the contest is fought. Human science can teach us absolutely nothing on this

deeply spiritual subject. Why not then accept with faith and reverence the account which Holy Scripture gives us of the personality of the rivals who contend for the mastery in this tremendous strife? Why not avail ourselves with humble gratitude of the sure salvation offered to us in the Gospel of CHRIST?

There is one form of temptation which has sprung up at different times in the world's history, and is specially rife in the present time—the temptation to disbelieve God's Word—to fancy that we know better; in a word, the pride of intellect. When our first mother Eve declared to the tempter that they were forbidden to eat of the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil, the tempter with bold audacity declared, "Ye shall not surely die, for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil." Is not this the very temptation which assails the philosophers of the present day? They will not believe God's Word—they fancy they know better. They will not believe that God will punish sin—especially the sin of infidelity. And refusing to believe themselves, they become the agents of the tempter, and endeavour by wicked devices to lead others into the same sin and scepticism as themselves—even as the serpent first tempted Eve to her destruction, and then made use of her in-

fluence to deceive her husband—so now, he first tempts weak and sinful men to dare to disbelieve the Word of God, and then uses their perverted talents for the destruction of those who are so imprudent as to listen to their seduction.

If this be allegory, it is not less the truth.

But the simple fact is that the whole matter is altogether beyond the scope of philosophy. The philosopher is only making a fool of himself when he presumes to meddle with such matters. He knows absolutely nothing from philosophy of these matters. He must believe the testimony of God's Word, or reject it at his peril.

There is one other point to which I would briefly advert. Some might ask, Why does the Great Ruler of the universe permit Satan to do all this mischief? Why not destroy him and his works, and root them out? This was the question asked by the servants of the householder in that remarkable parable, the parable of the tares. It may seem at first a paradox to assert that evil is permitted for the real benefit and perfecting God's elect. But if there were no physical evil in the world, no poverty, no disease, no misery, where would be the field for the exercise of the self-denying labours of those holy men and women who devote themselves to labours of love? Again, temptation is essential to the exercise and trial of God's servants; and gives occasion to the

development of the highest graces of the Spirit. How otherwise would they be trained in the highest of all Christian graces—charity. We beseech our FATHER in heaven to forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us. But if none trespassed against us, if there were no provocation, no reviling, no injurious dealing, there would be no opportunity for exercising the Evangelical graces of forgiveness, meekness, gentleness, long-suffering. So if there were no contradiction of ungodly men, no over-bearing or tyranny, there would be no occasion for the exercise of the heavenly virtues of patience and forbearance. For this end it is, doubtless, that GOD suffers Satan and his evil agents to tempt and vex us mortals, in order that by the exercise of faith and piety, long-suffering and forgiveness, we may contribute to the glory of GOD, and attain a brighter resurrection.

This argument does not bear so much on the question of the origin of evil, as on its continuance—why, when it had entered into the world, GOD does not stamp it out—why He does not root out the tares which the enemy hath sown. The contemplation of the subject will, I think, lead us into some of the most wondrous depths of Christian philosophy.

CHAPTER XIX.

REVIVAL OF PAGANISM.—THE CREED OF EPICURUS.—ITS
UTTER SELFISHNESS AND SHORT-SIGHTEDNESS.

It is generally supposed by not very thoughtful persons that the world is a good deal wiser than it used to be,—that the human intellect has marched on in double quick time in the last century, or half century. Of course as regards mere material science there is some truth in this opinion. Except in times of revolution and anarchy, science must advance, just as in building a house those who build the walls advance on those who lay the foundation, and those who crown the edifice with the roof, advance on those who have built the walls. But the crowners of the edifice cannot claim any superior wisdom or knowledge above those who laid the foundation. The present race of natural philosophers have a great advantage over those which have gone before them in the improvement of mechanical instruments. If our forefathers had possessed microscopes and telescopes like those in present use,

they might have made as many discoveries as the present men of science,—and without these appliances, it may be doubted whether the present men would have discovered what they have. So that any claim of superior intellect in the present generation would be very doubtful.

However, this is not the matter which I desire to insist on. What I wish now to point out is that though in mere physical science the present generation of philosophers has made a considerable advance, yet that in real philosophy,—the philosophy of morals, the knowledge of human life, its relations, duties and tendencies, the philosophers of the present year, 1873, have retrograded from the position even of their fathers, they have in truth gone back in the world's history about 2000 years.

The simple fact is that some of those who profess and call themselves philosophers in the present age are neither more nor less than Epicureans.

The late Mr. George Grote, the historian, has in his appendix to his book on Aristotle a chapter on Epicurus, a few extracts from which will show the close resemblance between the opinions of some modern philosophers and the sect of Epicureans.

“It was a capital error (Epicurus declared) to suppose that the gods employed themselves as

agents in working or superintending the march of the kosmos, [the world,] or in conferring favours on some men, and administering chastisements to others. The vulgar religious tales which represented them in this manner were untrue and insulting as regards the gods themselves, and pregnant with perversion and misery as regards the hopes and fears of mankind. . . . Epicurus thought that the perfect, eternal, and unperturbable well-being and felicity of the gods excluded the supposition of their being agents. He looked upon them as types of that unmolested safety, and unalloyed satisfaction, which was what he understood by pleasure and happiness; as objects of reverential envy, whose sympathy he was likely to obtain by assimilating his own temper and conditions to them as far as human circumstances allowed. These theological views were placed by Epicurus in the foreground of his ethical philosophy. . . . He disallowed all prophecy, divination, and oracular inspiration, by which the public around him believed that the gods were perpetually communicating special revelations to individuals, and for which Socrates felt so peculiarly thankful." Is not this very closely allied to the theology of some modern philosophers? If they admit that there must have been a First Cause who made the world, they deny that He takes any care of His creatures.

They refuse to acknowledge Him as a Father, much more as a Saviour. They imagine that He listens to no prayer, gives no communication of His laws, in short, that He takes no interest whatever in the creatures which He has made. The Christian views GOD as a GOD of love, a FATHER Who careth for His children, and above all things desires their happiness. The wonderful love of GOD the SON in the redemption of the world, our modern philosophers utterly ignore.

“The physics of Epicurus was borrowed in the main from the atomic theory of Democritus, but modified by him in a manner subservient and contributory to his ethical scheme. To that scheme it was essential that those celestial, atmospheric, or terrestrial phenomena which the public around him ascribed to the agency and purposes of the gods, should be understood as being produced by physical causes.” He denied, like our modern philosophers, that GOD ever interposed in the works and laws of creation. In fact, if he believed in any God at all, he carefully excluded him from all concern or care for the work of his hands.

The moral views of the Epicureans agree with this notion about their gods. “The standard of virtue and vice is referred by Epicurus to pleasure and pain. Pain is the only evil, pleasure is the only good. Virtue is no end in itself to be

sought, vice is no end in itself to be avoided. The motive for cultivating virtue and banishing vice arises from the consequences of each as the means of multiplying pleasures and averting and lessening pains. But to the attainment of this purpose the complete supremacy of reason is indispensable; in order that we may take a right comparative measure of the varieties of pleasure and pain, and pursue the course which promises the least amount of suffering." It is fair to add that he considered the mental element to outweigh the mere body both in pleasure and pain; as no doubt modern philosophers,—say at a meeting of the British Association,—consider the éclat of their scientific lectures to outweigh the pleasures of the good fare which follows them.

Amongst the chief evils of this life Epicurus considered to be the "two greatest torments of human existence—the fear of death, and of eternal suffering after death, as announced by prophets and poets, and the fear of the gods." In fact, Epicurus did not believe in the continued existence of the soul. He supposed that a man might live a luxurious, self-indulgent life,—gratify all his worst propensities of lust and cruelty, tyrannize over his fellow-creatures, and yet die in a good old age without fear of future accountability. Is not this the very same feeling which in the present day impels men to deny the

eternity of punishment, and reject the warnings of the Athanasian Creed? But *can* men who live in a Christian age *really* put from them the dreadful feeling that in spite of their wilful scepticism these things may be true? The Epicurean notion of escaping the punishment of evil deeds after death can scarcely be attained by those who have heard God's Revelation. The worst of men have been most haunted by superstitious terrors. How much wiser, how much more philosophical in every way to accept the mercy of God, and lead holy lives.

Human happiness consisted, according to Epicurus, "in the satisfaction of the wants of life, and the conversation of friends a tranquil, undisturbed, innocuous, non-competitive fruition which approached most nearly to the perfect happiness of the gods"—no fear of future punishment—no hope of future recompense for the righteous.

It is not difficult to understand why such persons as the Sadducees amongst the Jews, and the Epicureans amongst the Greek and Romans, and others like them, in every age of the world should have held sceptical opinions respecting a future state of existence. Enjoying in this world all the gratifications which wealth and power could afford, dazzled by worldly vanities, immersed in the turmoil of business, or sunk in sensual in-

dulgence, they felt how utterly unfitted they were for pure and spiritual enjoyments : and so, because they were conscious that, if a day of retribution should arrive, it would be to them a day of sorrow and confusion, they resolved to banish the subject from their minds. Because they had nothing to hope they resolved if possible to fear nothing. They vainly thought to make a compromise between heaven and hell by persuading themselves to disbelieve the existence of either. They imagined that they could escape the danger by closing their eyes against it, as the foolish ostrich fancies that he can escape his pursuers by plunging his head into the sand. They forgot that their opinion could have no possible influence one way or the other, but that the rewards and punishments of another world would be just as real and true whether they chose to believe them or not.

And did it never occur to these philosophers that it is most unreasonable to judge of the prospects of the whole human race, by the present condition of a small part of them ? It may be that they themselves enjoyed their present existence, and, on condition that they might be allowed free scope for the indulgence of their ease and carnal pursuits, would ignobly barter their hopes of life eternal. And they felt doubtless that to deny the doctrine of future retribu-

tion was to remove a thorn from their side, and take away the bitterest ingredient from their cup of worldly pleasure. But, with characteristic selfishness, they forgot the case of hundreds of thousands and millions of human beings, to whom this life is one unbroken series of hardship and toil.

Could Epicurus and his friends—can modern philosophers whose creed agrees with his—for a moment look on the state of the world around them and imagine that this is the whole of man's existence? If "this tranquil, undisturbed, innocuous, non-competitive fruition, and satisfaction of the wants of life" is the *summum bonum* of human existence, does it not occur to them that the vast majority of the human race are hopelessly debarred from ever attaining happiness of this sort? Almighty God, or Fate, as the philosophers would say, has imposed on all but a few a continual struggle for existence; they are doomed to eat bread in the sweat of their brow. Can it for a moment be believed that nothing is in store after this life for the honest and laborious sons of toil who pass through this world in performing the duties of the station to which God has called them? Is this poor life with all its labour, and disappointment, pain, and inevitable disease, all that God has prepared for those who serve Him faithfully?

Yet so it is supposed by these philosophers. While God's minister holds out the happiness of heaven as the sure reward of all those who serve God faithfully in this life, the heartless scepticism of the philosopher would lead to the conclusion, that the destiny of poor suffering mortals after the miseries of this sinful world is either to be for ever miserable, or for ever—nothing; that is, simply annihilation or hell!

For men who have once heard the blessed tidings of the Gospel to go back to the dreary creed of Epicurus, and bring themselves to believe that this life is the whole of their existence, that no punishment is in store for the wicked, no reward for those who diligently seek the LORD, is a proof, if none other were assignable, that the human intellect is not so progressive as modern philosophers would persuade us. But as Mr. Grote says, "It is certain that he [Epicurus] disregarded the logical part of the process, the systematic study of propositions, and their relations of consistency one with another"—in all this how exactly in accordance with the theories of modern philosophers.

It would be unjust not to mention that the Epicureans spoke highly of justice and friendship. They considered that just and righteous dealing was the indispensable condition to every one's comfort, because if a man was unjust to others he could not expect others to be just to him. They

insisted also on the value of friendship as a means of happiness to both the persons so united. Yes, "the greatest happiness principle" is no invention of modern philosophers, but simply a going back to Pagan precedents. I have no doubt that our modern sceptics are men of strict justice—they pay their just debts, because they know the consequences if they do not—and will ask their friends to dinner, not without the hope of a similar entertainment in return. And yet these very men are they who, by the dogmas which they promulgate, are ruining the souls of thousands of their fellow-creatures, in utter carelessness of the destruction which they are scattering.

I am afraid that I shall be guilty of a bathos in suggesting one argument which modern Epicureans perhaps have overlooked. If there are no rewards and punishments in the world to come, it is surely unfair that some people should have so much of this world's goods, and others so little. If, indeed, the poverty of Lazarus in this life is to be made up to him at the feast of heaven, he may well endure his worldly privation with patience. But if there is to be no such rectification of this world's anomalies, and no punishment for robbery and violence, what is to prevent the Communist from taking measures to equalize the present condition of men, and force his rich neighbour to share with him his worldly goods? This seems to be a just corollary of the doctrine of Epicurus.

CHAPTER XX.

DIFFERENT DEGREES OF WRONG-HEADEDNESS.—THE SIMPLE,
SCORNERS, FOOLS.

THERE are different degrees of wrong-headedness amongst those who refuse to walk in wisdom's way. "How long," says the wise man, "how long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity, and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?" Three sorts of persons are here addressed. First, "simple ones." The simple ones are those who are not presumptuously wicked, but are led astray from true religion by trifling and unworthy objects. Like children, they seem not to appreciate the consequences of their actions. A child, or schoolboy, does not discern the advantage of the instruction and discipline to which he is subject. He does not understand how necessary it is for his welfare in after life to be able to read and write, to learn Latin and Greek, mathematics, and modern languages. He loves his sports and pastimes—his tops and marbles, his cricket and boating, and

grudges if they be interfered with. He would gladly throw his books into the fire, and spend all his time in amusement. Just so the simple ones amongst grown-up men and women are wont to be wholly taken up with their present enjoyments and occupations. They dance and sing, and adorn themselves, and occupy their time in these various pleasures, recreations, flirtations—or, even in the case of grave men, they are so full of their favourite pursuits, their politics and business, their speculations and schemes of getting rich, and rising in the world—or with pursuits more doubtful even than these—their sporting and horse-racing, pigeon-shooting, their mountain-climbing and yachting ; or, if they are philosophers, they are so eager about their experiments and researches, calculations and investigations, and articles in reviews—many of them, no doubt, excellent things in their way—that they fancy they have no time for the concerns of eternity. Grave matters of religion seem to them of far inferior moment to their favourite pursuits, and this not so much from absolute wickedness as from simplicity or frivolousness, or mere incapacity to discern the relative value of things. And as children will often bestow ten times as much pains on some comparatively worthless labour of their own choosing, as on that which their parents or teachers set them to do, so the simple ones of the

world, immersed in mere temporal pursuits, worn out with toil for that which perisheth in the gaining, labouring for bread which satisfieth not, fancying that they are bestowing their pains on some vastly important object, do in the meantime overlook that which is the real business of life, neglect to acquaint themselves with God, and live to His glory, and improve the grace given them, and cultivate those holier faculties which may fit them for a higher state of existence. The sacred labour of self-discipline, subduing evil within them, communing with God and the spiritual world, exercising themselves in prayer and holy meditation—all this appears to them irksome and unprofitable, and so they put it away. They hope, it may be, to attend to religion some day, but the years speed on, and, too often, find the simple ones still engaged in their vanities, still loving their simplicity.

The next class of irreligious persons is worse than that already described—inasmuch as there is more of wilfulness and deliberation in their irreligion. The simple are irreligious from thoughtlessness, but scorers are men who of set purpose, and from a sort of strange pleasure, “delight in their scorning.” There are too many of this sort in the world around us. The unbridled liberty of thought and speech in which men of the present age so much boast themselves, has led many to

scorn and despise religion, and scoff at all that is good, and excellent, and holy. The root of evil in them is pride—pride of intellect—conceit of their own ability. It is not that, like the former class, they are led astray by thoughtlessness and simplicity, but they scorn holy things and holy men—look down upon them, laugh at what is good.

But there is a worse class of men than even these; “fools that hate knowledge”—not only scorn, but hate it. It is not mere thoughtlessness, or self-conceit that characterizes the irreligion of these men—but positive hatred of what is good and holy. The wise man speaks in very strong terms of the wickedness of such as these. “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.” “Fools make a mock at sin.” “Foolish men blaspheme God.” “Fools despise wisdom and instruction.” “The fool rageth, and is confident.” “Though thou shouldst bray a fool in a mortar, yet will his foolishness not depart from him.” From which various descriptions of the character of the fool, it appears that it is not mere deficiency of judgment and knowledge; but there is in him a sort of wilful obstinacy and wrong-headedness, which causes him to harden his heart against true wisdom, and continue resolutely in his sin and error. It is astonishing with what determination men of this sort set themselves

against religion, what futile and shallow arguments they often use ; at other times, with what ingenuity they frame excuses for continuing in their evil headstrong course. For these men are commonly no fools in worldly matters, but shrewd enough in temporal things, clever it may be in mere material philosophy—only fools, desperate fools, in things which concern the good of their souls. Hence it is that they “hate knowledge.” Real knowledge—that is, knowledge of God’s Truth, reminds the fool of his danger, checks him in the midst of his folly, sets before him his real condition, shows him that however wise he may be in the world’s wisdom, yet if he loses his soul he will be obliged to confess one day “that he has played the fool, and erred exceedingly.” But these things the fool does not like to be reminded of. And because God’s Word reminds him of them he hates it ; and if at any time he hears God’s ministers say anything which reminds him of his folly, he hates them too. “Hast thou found me, O mine enemy ?” said Ahab to Elijah. Thus the fool thinks God’s ministers his enemies. No one is louder against priestcraft, and bigotry, and superstition, than the man of this character. Even if he is brought to acknowledge his sinfulness and the need of repentance, he hardens his heart against the means whereby pardon may be sought and obtained. Self-discipline, self-

examination, secret communing with God, holy ordinances, sacraments, confession of sin—all these are his special aversion. Hence it is that the fool is in so hopeless a case—there is no getting at his heart to do him good. For even if he knows his disease, he is too proud and obstinate to adopt the means necessary for his recovery. He has an inveterate distaste for all that is lowly, humbling, self-denying—all that is pure, holy, and religious—he hates knowledge, and will have none of its counsel. This sort of wilful dogged sin, is closely allied to the sin against the HOLY GHOST, which can be forgiven neither in this world nor in the world to come, because it consists in putting from us wilfully and angrily the remedy by which our disease might be cured. And a man who has brought himself to this state of mind becomes the instrument of Satan for the destruction of others. Not content with ruining their own souls, men of this sort have a strange and fiendish delight in beguiling others to their ruin, spreading around evil opinions, alluring men to unbelief, contempt of Scripture, neglect of holy things—nay, often in deliberately seducing them into bad, immoral habits—so closely connected is unbelief and hardness of heart with the most cruel and degraded vice.

I do not venture to judge individuals, but I would put it to any one capable of reasoning,

whether it is possible to conceive a more miserable and guilty man than one who of set purpose destroys the soul of his brother—perhaps thousands of his brethren, by undermining their faith in CHRIST. To do so carelessly, or presumptuously, or ignorantly from neglect to ascertain the truth, is a tremendous responsibility; but wilfully to draw souls away from CHRIST, is nothing short of the malice of the Arch-Fiend himself.

I must not conclude these bitter, but most true, words of remonstrance without adding from the same page of Scripture some which are more hopeful and consolatory. “Turn ye,” says the wise man, “turn ye at my reproof, and I will pour out my spirit unto you, and I will make known my words unto you :” “If thou wilt incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thy heart to understanding—yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as hid treasure, then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God. . . . Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding; for the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. . . . Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.”

CHAPTER XXI.

EFFECTS OF ATHEISM.—“A RETROGRADATION TO SAVAGERY.”

THERE seems to be an infatuated blindness in the public mind, even amongst religious people, with regard to the tendency of the philosophical scepticism of the present day. It is not that warning voices are not uttered, but people do not attend to them. They seem to think that things will go on very comfortably, that we shall continue as we are, a rich and peaceful community, that our prosperity will remain as yesterday, and even more abundant. They are blind, or rather shut their eyes, to the fact that many serious evils are growing up, that good old principles are wearing out, new and dangerous feelings pervading the public mind, old-fashioned notions of religion and obedience to law are becoming sadly obliterated.

In particular the tremendous example of France in the last century is gradually wearing out in the minds of Englishmen. In our younger days

the example of the French Revolution was held up as a warning against Atheism and insubordination. No one doubted, and none doubt even now, if they do but think of it, that the almost unparalleled sufferings of France at the end of the last century, and not yet brought to a termination, sprang from the Atheism which had been imbibed from the writings of the Encyclopædists, and sceptical philosophers, Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, and others, who corrupted the public mind. Nor was it less doubted that the exemption of England from the same horrors of revolution was due to the maintenance of our principles of religion and public order. But these wholesome impressions seem to have died away. Religion has come to be thought an affair between each man and God alone. Sceptical philosophers spread the most pestiferous doctrines broad-cast through the land, and unthinking people encourage, or at least listen with interest to, their unwholesome speculations. Sceptical literature obtains abundant circulation, from some of the articles in the *Contemporary* down to *Reynolds'*, or the mock Litanies, in many of which Atheism is mingled with the most atrocious and murderous principles. Let any one, if he wishes to satisfy himself on this head, just go through a course of *Reynolds'* for a few weeks. I myself have done so. The very first paragraph which caught my

eye was to the following effect : " If all the kings and princes of Europe were placed in a row, and a mitrailleuse pointed at them, who that valued the interests of humanity would not say—fire ?" These notions of mixed Atheism and Revolution spread themselves gradually, or rather rapidly, through all classes. Our villages are not free from the contagion. A half drunken man reels out from a debate in the beer-shop, with the words, " Well, all that I can say is, that all rich people ought to be hanged." And so I have no doubt a good many will be hanged, if the people are made Atheists. Such are the sort of words which one may hear even in a rural village ; judge what may be heard amongst the roughs in our great towns. There cannot be the slightest doubt, that the combined influence of Infidelity and Revolution is widely spreading throughout the land, and threatens a subversion of our political and social institutions.

It will be said, perhaps, that circumstances differ very much in this country from those which existed in France before the French Revolution. Of course they do ; you might point out many things quite different, but I fear many are essentially the same. It may be said that there is not in this country the same marked distinction between classes, the *noblesse* on the one hand, the *canaille* on the other. There is a great middle

class which holds the scales between them. Yes, but there has grown up in England a demarcation of classes which is equally dangerous, in some respects more so. The division which exists between labour and capital separates the community into two antagonistic parties. It may be quite right—I believe it is so—that workmen's and labourers' wages should be raised in proportion to the rise in articles of consumption. We may hope that things may yet right themselves: still there is manifest danger ahead. What is the cause of the wealth and prosperity of England? What but the industry and skill of her people. But if the English workman will not work, if he does less work than the men of other countries, the very source of our wealth is cut off. At present we have to import nearly one half of the food we consume, and pay for it by the manufactures which we send out. But if the people will not work, and consequently are not able to send out manufactures in payment for their food, there is no help for it but that there will be a general scramble for what is left. This year we happen to be in the full flood of prosperous commerce. Next year or the year after there may be a reaction. Then will come the trial. It will be absolutely impossible for the employers of labour to pay the same wages as they are now paying for a reduced amount of work. What will our work-

men do for their beer and other indulgences, not to speak of the maintenance of their families? They are, I fear, as a body utterly unable to understand the position of affairs. Their ears will be open only to the counsel of demagogues. Will the country stand the pressure? If all classes were imbued with the spirit of Christianity there might be a better hope. Patient endurance on the part of the poor, self-denying charity on the part of the rich, might, by God's blessing, bring us through. But, alas! Christian principle has been undermined by the philosophers. It is well if society is not resolved into its elements, and an universal scramble takes place for the mere necessities of existence. Communists and Socialists will avail themselves of the opportunity to upset all that remains of social order and religion, and England may present a spectacle of misfortune, such as the world has not before witnessed.

Most people who think at all about such subjects, deem it at least possible that some such state of things awaits us. Some, of course, are more sanguine. They think if there was a row in London, for instance, that all the better sort of people would unite together as they did in 1848—that we should have 200,000 special constables prepared to put down riot and revolution. God grant it may be so! But, first, we have not the Duke of Wellington to organize our defence;

again, I question whether there is the same spirit amongst our better class of people, or the same energy in our rulers. We must remember the day of the Park palings. Some will say, it can never be in London as it was lately in Paris, when the Communists were drilled, and had 300 cannons, and an unlimited supply of arms. Well, but there may be some other concatenation of circumstances equally dangerous. One of our greatest misfortunes is the want of principle in political parties. It may suit the leader of a party—or he may fancy it will suit him—to let his friends, the mob, have their way for a while, and all Government may be toppled over before we are aware of it.

But, not if there were a good religious spirit in the people. If we were a nation of Christians, who believed in the great doctrines of religion, and were trained to regard them; if men, both rich and poor, acted under the constant impression that there was a heaven and hell, and an account to be given at the last day, a GOD the FATHER Who rules us, a SAVIOUR Who has redeemed us, and a HOLY GHOST Who would enable us to lead godly lives, of course, there would be no danger of a violent and murderous revolution. But our sceptical philosophers have done what they can to undermine all these principles, though, thank God, there are many good Christians amongst us,

prepared to do and to suffer; yet, thanks to the philosopher, a spirit of unbelief has spread throughout the masses, and we can no longer trust for safety to the right feeling of our people.

Amongst the minor evil effects of the recent tendency to scepticism is the following, which I find in the pages of the *Contemporary Review*, (Sep. 1873, p. 572):—"The insolent discourtesy towards ladies, exhibited, not here and there, but at almost every recent gathering of the upper classes. . . . In ceasing to be Christians they have ceased to be gentlemen." A most natural consequence, and much to be deplored.

Of course, the principal evil, which arises from the un-Christianizing of the nation, by our philosophical sceptics, is the fearful loss of souls, which must infallibly happen. Still, it is not necessary for the Christian to leave altogether out of the question the temporal ruin which will be entailed by the prevalence of the same principle. Imagine, for a moment, that the Atheists had their way—that they persuaded the people generally that there was no Judgment, no account to be given after this World—no Heaven and Hell. Imagine the mass of our people to become under such teaching a horde of Atheists—unbelievers in a GOD and SAVIOUR, acting on the principle, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." Instead of hearing, as they now do

week by week from the pulpit, exhortations to serve God, and love their neighbour, and lead good and honest lives, and if they have sinned, to repent and turn to God, and keep His Commandments for the future, suppose that philosophic infidels persuaded the people to adopt their principles,—what a wild scene of reckless havoc and confusion would ensue ! An age of darkness might be expected to arise, far more gloomy and disastrous than any that the world has seen. To describe the misery of living in such a period of the world is impossible—the scenes of horror and confusion which would certainly arise if religion were banished from our land can be imagined, but not depicted. There would be, as it has been well expressed, “a retrogradation to savagery.” Are there not some men even now—some who have figured in recent scenes in other countries—who are worse than gorillas ?

Yet it is the avowed object of some of our leading philosophers to destroy the Faith of CHRIST from the land !

CHAPTER XXII.

RESERVE TO BE USED IN INTERCOURSE WITH UNBELIEVERS.—ODIUM THEOLOGICUM, WHAT IS IT?

WHAT a strange, illiberal, bigoted notion it is in the estimation of the advanced Liberals and men of the world, that we ought to make any difference in our behaviour to people on account of their religious belief! What! not receive a man into your house who does not abide in the true doctrine of CHRIST, (see 2 S. John 9,) not bid him God speed if he happens not to agree with you in your religious views? Why this is more fit for the days of the Inquisition, or of the Star Chamber, than for the nineteenth century! and yet these are the very words of the Disciple whom JESUS loved,—the most loving and affectionate of all the Disciples. And they agree entirely with the words of the other Apostles, nay, of our LORD Himself,—“Now, I beseech you, mark them that cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have received, and avoid them.” “In the last days perilous times shall come, for

men shall be lovers of their own selves, heady, high-minded, having the form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." It is clear that the lax and liberal notions of the present day on these matters are clean contrary to the letter and spirit of the ever blessed Gospel. So much the worse for the Gospel, the infidel would say. But I am addressing Christians, and endeavouring to show what line of conduct their religion requires of them.

I cannot believe that those who think and speak lightly of atheism and unbelief are the most charitable. They may really be doing the unbelievers the greatest injury which one man can do to another, by making them disregard the sin of unbelief, and so confirming them in their unhappy course. In fact it is just the eclat bestowed on clever sceptics which is the moving cause of their scepticism, or at least of their endeavours to give it notoriety.

You will hear unthinking persons refer to the example of the Good Samaritan. Here, say they, is an example of real charity. The Good Samaritan never thought of inquiring what religion the wounded traveller was of,—whether he was his fellow-countryman, or one of the hostile race of Judea; but as soon as he saw his miserable plight, he went at once and raised him from the

ground, and bound up his wounds and conveyed him to a place of safety. Yes; and I hope every true Christian would go and do likewise. If we saw a stranger lying on the roadside in affliction, and suffering, who would ever think of inquiring what religion he was of before rendering him assistance? The idea is absurd. We should regard him simply as a fellow-creature who was in need of present assistance, and promptly render him all the help we could. And yet I see nothing absurd in the habit of good George Herbert, who, when a beggar asked for alms, would require him to say the Creed and the Lord's Prayer, and if he found him able to repeat them, would relieve him the more liberally. It would rather surprise some of our tramps in the present day, if, when they begged of the parson of the parish, he made them say their Catechism. Yet they would have no reason to complain if they got another sixpence, or perhaps a good meal for their proficiency. Certainly George Herbert's plan was quaint, like his poems, yet it involves the true principle that we ought to "do good unto all men, and specially to those that are of the household of faith."

I am reminded of another story which was told, I think, of the celebrated Wesley, illustrative of the duty of avoiding the irreligious. Once on a time in his journeyings he was benighted and overtaken by a violent storm, and was glad

to take shelter in a comfortable farmhouse, where he was hospitably received, and a night's lodging freely offered him. Before retiring to rest, he looked for the assembly of the members of the family for prayer, and greatly was he surprised when he found that such was not their intention,—though he himself offered to officiate, they refused to accept his service. But his resolution was at once taken. He went forth and saddled his horse, and pursued his journey, preferring to brave the discomforts of the pelting storm, rather than pass the night under a roof where no prayer was offered for God's mercy, no thanksgiving for His goodness.

These may appear to some overstrained sentiments, but the stories well illustrate the duty of regarding the religious character of those with whom we associate in contradistinction to the lax morality of those who view the Christian and the infidel with the same regard.

It is far too much the practice in the present day to think and speak lightly of such transgressions as do not interfere with our own personal comfort and safety. We are ready enough to bring the strong arm of the law to bear on those who are guilty of crimes from which we apprehend that we ourselves may suffer in our persons or our property ; there is great indignation against thieves, murderers, housebreakers, impostors, cheats, and little pity is felt for such persons

when detected and punished. But there are also many criminals equally culpable in the sight of God whose sins are commonly palliated from a feeling of spurious charity. Drunkards are spoken of as no man's enemies but their own; heretics and unbelievers are regarded as justified in holding what opinions they please; and the fact of their corrupting God's truth, destroying men's souls, is looked upon as an affair in which they themselves only are concerned, and of which no one has any right to complain. There is a common saying which has the semblance of Christian sentiment, but as commonly applied, is a mere maxim of latitudinarianism, that "we ought to hate the sin, but love the sinner." If by "loving the sinner" is meant that we ought to pity and pray for him, and endeavour to redeem him from his error, the sentiment is just; but if it be meant, as it is too commonly applied, that we ought to behave to the unbeliever and heretic with the same cordiality and respect, and receive him with the same love and affection as we do our Christian brother, then the saying is mischievous and fallacious, and a proof of the irreligious mind of him who utters it.

Think only of the utter difference of principle in the Christian and the unbeliever. The Christian is persuaded that the eternal welfare of souls depends on their accepting the salvation pur-

chased for them by CHRIST. The infidel not only disbelieves this doctrine, but often does all in his power to persuade others not to accept the salvation through CHRIST, and, as we believe, is the means of ruining the souls of many. The Christian believes that righteousness exalteth a nation, that the prosperity of his country depends on their being true worshippers of GOD; that if the nation should reject Christianity, ruin and misery would fall upon it. He sees recent evidence of the fearful evil of infidel opinions in the horrible anarchy which quite recently afflicted France during the rule of the Communists, which was greatly surpassed at the time of the first French Revolution. Spain is even at the present moment exhibiting an example of the tremendous evil of ungodliness. How can a man who views things in this light feel friendship for those who are actively encouraging principles which have worked so much misery?

Again, the Christian believes that the only safe mode of bringing up the rising generation in good and honest ways, is by educating them from their earliest infancy in the true doctrines of CHRIST. In that faith he brings up his own children, and desires to see those of his fellow-subjects brought up, deeming that it would be the greatest boon the nation could confer upon them. But there are men who do all they can to

frustrate the religious education of the people,—who obstruct by every means in their power this communication of religious knowledge, religious habits, and principle, and impede the endeavours of good men to imbue the youthful mind of the nation with the principles of CHRIST's true religion. How can Christian men have any sympathy or fellowship with men who act on principles such as these; who, not content themselves to live without GOD in this world, perversely do all in their power to thwart the labours of GOD's servants to spread the knowledge of the truth?

I have in a former chapter adverted to the most cruel and audacious attempt to undervalue the duty and privilege of prayer. Alas! how much have they to answer for who have prejudiced the minds of any against this chief instrument of godliness and salvation, and, it may be, prevented the poor helpless sinner from availing himself of what might have softened his hard heart, and brought him in true penitence to GOD's footstool.

The question is, if question there can be, what should be the conduct and bearing of Christians towards men like these who oppose and frustrate what we hold to be most vital and holy. There can be no doubt that it is the duty of those who love GOD to set their faces with a righteous indig-

nation against God's enemies, the breakers of God's commandments, the blasphemers of His Name, and all who in any way resist His authority, corrupt His Word, and deny the faith. Against such as these it is our bounden duty to be ready at all times to protest with all our might, and to take heed that we give them no countenance or encouragement, lest we be partakers of their evil deeds, and sharers in their just punishment. And especially those who are placed in authority,—sovereigns, legislators, magistrates, masters of families, parents,—all of us, in short, in our several stations are bound to use the authority and influence which God has given us for the suppression of vice, and the maintenance of true religion and virtue.

The following case occurred lately.

At the recent meeting of the British Association one person said that some part of the human body, [the vermiform appendage known as the diverticulum of the cæcum,] “was not an evidence of Almighty Power, but to be regarded as the effort of a tinker to mend the error of his works.” And this person was not turned out of the assembly, nor even called to order! Surely this was an unworthy carelessness of God's honour.

It will be said, perhaps, that parties, both religious and political, are so mixed up together—

society is constituted of so many various elements—that it is impossible to draw a strict line between believers and unbelievers, or to conform literally to the Apostolic ordinance. Admitting that there is some show of reason in these objections, nevertheless it is certain that many things are done, and done quite unnecessarily, and done by professing Christians, which seem almost expressly intended to put aside the Christian duty which we are considering, and prominently to set forth the opinion that Christians and infidels should be placed on the same footing. It does seem a gratuitous departure from propriety that men should be buried with all the highest honours of Christian sepulture amongst the benefactors of their country, who have habitually kept during life from within the walls of God's house. It does seem most inconsistent with the character of politicians, believed to be supporters of God's Church, to come forward to do honour to a man whose whole life has been spent in counteracting the doctrine of CHRIST. What are we to say to the strange anomaly of the University admitting to its highest honours a man whose most recent feat has been to dissuade men from the use of prayer?

I know very well what a sceptic would say in answer to what I have just written. "Oh, this is all odium theologicum," he will say. But if this

be "odium theologicum," it only shows that odium theologicum is not so bad a thing as it has been represented. If what they call "odium theologicum" be a just and honest indignation against those who lead their brethren to reject the Gospel of CHRIST, I should say it was an essential part of the Christian character.

CHAPTER XXIII.

EDUCATION AS CONNECTED WITH RELIGION AND SCIENCE.

THE disputes about education arise principally from not defining what education really is. When different persons, or two different parties, speak of education, they mean quite different things. Let us endeavour to analyse the subject.

All will agree that reading, writing, and arithmetic, are primary requisites for education, and are the necessary foundations for future acquirements. The boys and girls, brought up at our day-schools, ought, when they leave school at twelve or thirteen, to be able to read fluently, write correctly and grammatically, and know so much of the first rules of arithmetic as may suffice for the requirements of ordinary life. So far all persons are agreed.

But now many people in the present day think that children ought to be scientifically educated. Well. But it is not considered how much of the elementary and most important parts of science come naturally. An infant first opening his eyes

knows nothing of optics or perspective. He squints most awfully ; one eye looks one way and one another. But nature soon teaches him to adjust the focus and look straight. Again, he sees all things at first as on one plane. He tries to lay hold on the moon, fancying that it is close to him ; it is only gradually that he learns the relative distance of objects. Children soon learn the scientific fact that fire will burn their fingers, and observe, with Newton, that apples fall to the ground. An interesting experiment is often made by the young philosopher shying sticks up at the apples, which clearly demonstrates their gravitation to the earth. And this often leads to another discovery in science, namely, that a smart blow on the back from a cane or ash plant so affects the afferent nerve-trunk as to cause considerable pain, and draw tears from the eyes, as Mr. Darwin has so luminously explained. Proceeding on with their scientific education, boys learn that a marble shot with force communicates its force to another marble, on which it impinges, and drives it from the ring, so that it may be lawfully transferred to the pocket. The top, they observe, not only revolves on its own axis, but also forms an orbit round an imaginary centre. A clever master might utilize these experiences, by giving instruction on the revolution of the heavenly bodies, the theory of gravitation and force,

the nature of the nerves, and cerebrum, and many other useful matters. It is desirable that books used in schools for instruction in reading should contain information on common things—inform the children that the earth goes round the sun, and not the sun round the earth; what is the cause of the change from day to night; why the moon sometimes appears full and sometimes as a crescent. I think a good deal of this sort of knowledge might be imparted incidentally—as, again, why it is that by digging a well you generally come to water; why coal has been called “bottled sunbeams;” what is the difference between veins and arteries, nerves and muscles, and a host of things all in a general way; but as to giving the children of our elementary schools any systematic knowledge of these things, the time does not allow of it.

Nor, in fact, would such knowledge be of much use to them, except in connection with their special occupations. Take one of the most valuable discoveries of modern times, the steam engine. Look at the scores of people waiting at the station to meet the train. How many of these persons are acquainted with the theory of latent heat, or even with the structure of the engine which is to whirl them along—the piston, the crank, the governor? Very few indeed. What most concerns us all to know is, when the train starts, and

when it will take us to our journey's end, and how much we have to pay. The scientific theory and construction of the steam engine are of small importance, except to those who have to make the engine, or to guide it. And so it is in other departments of knowledge. It is very desirable to have a good chemist, and a good lawyer in every town. But it is not necessary to other people to know much about chemistry, and we all know the old saying about the man who is his own lawyer. But while we want only one good chemist, and one lawyer, and one doctor, and one post-master, we want all to be good Christians.

I argue, therefore, that if we send our children from our schools well up in reading, writing, and arithmetic, it is of small importance for them to know much about science; in fact, they have no time to enter, except quite superficially, into the subject.

And it is much the same in the higher departments of education. I am far from saying that it is not desirable for our young men at the universities to know the principles of science. And for this purpose, I would strongly advise them to attend the lectures on geology, anatomy, chemistry, or botany, for all which opportunity is afforded. "This," says Dr. Newman, in his *Grammar of Assent*, "is what is called with spe-

cial appositeness, a gentleman's knowledge as contrasted with that of a professional man, and is neither worthless nor despicable." But on no account let these pursuits be allowed to displace the old established university studies. It is not necessary for English gentlemen to be chemists, or geologists, or anatomists, beyond knowing the general principle of these sciences. But it is necessary for every well-educated man to be acquainted with the literature of past ages—the poets, the orators, the historians of ancient Greece and Rome. In point of fact language is the highest of all sciences; and command of language is of all things most necessary for those who would excel in the senate, the bar, or the pulpit, or exercise important influence for good in any department of life.

But now comes the important question—Is what I have described education? Suppose a boy passes through our elementary schools, and goes home able to read perfectly, to write correctly, and cipher accurately, but is untrained in moral conduct—is untruthful, deceitful, violent, quarrelsome, selfish, "incontinent, fierce, heady, high-minded," given to swearing, lying, and bad language, should we say that such a boy was educated? Would any parent think that his son had received a good education? I think not. He would say that he had been shamefully neg-

lected. Was it not the Duke of Wellington who said that such a system would only train up a set of "clever devils?" Surely we ought to educate the higher nature of youth—train up our children to be truthful, honest, conscientious, obedient to law, respectful to authority, resolved always to do the thing which is right. And not only should they be trained in the knowledge and practice of their duty to their fellow-men, but also in the knowledge of God and of all that He requires of them for their soul's everlasting peace. Give them all the knowledge you can, but if you neglect their moral character you have done absolutely nothing for their real happiness either in this world or the world to come.

And if convinced of this important truth, we come to inquire what means or appliances, what help or authority the teacher has in this, the highest part of education, we at once should say the Bible was the instrument given for that very purpose—"How shall a young man cleanse his way? even by ruling himself after Thy Word." "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of Whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scripture, which is able to make thee wise unto Salvation." The Bible is the

great store-house of all spiritual knowledge, and furnishes the rule for all right conduct in life.

But now the Bible is a large Book, or rather a collection of books: it is difficult to understand—at least it is difficult to comprehend and systematize its contents so as to gain from it a concise and available rule of faith or conduct. Children require to be taught the relation in which they stand to their GOD and FATHER—GOD the FATHER Who made them and all the world, GOD the SON Who redeemed them, and GOD the HOLY GHOST Who sanctifieth them. They require to be taught what are the commandments of GOD, how they may do their duty to GOD and Man, what are the means which GOD has given to help them in doing His Will. And what is this that we have been describing but the Church Catechism—that form of sound words gathered from Holy Scripture, and put forth by authority, which sums up the chief points of Christian faith and duty, and explains the means which GOD has provided for enabling us to live in His faith and fear—the Creed, the Commandments, the LORD's Prayer, and the Sacraments. Let children by all means be taught to read the Bible, and along with this let them be instructed in the brief and comprehensive summary of Christian faith and duty which may help them to understand and to practise what they read.

Let them be practically taught to regard truth—to exercise gentleness and self-denial, to act on Christian motives, to follow the dictates of conscience. Much of this *ought* to be learned at home from their parents; their pastor and school-master should lead them on in right ways.

Another important part of education is that children should be taught to worship God. It may not be that they will understand everything they hear in church. But it is a great point for them to be brought betimes under the sacred roof—to see their parents and those whom they look up to engaged in acts of devotion—to hear the solemn chant and anthem, and the Word of God publicly read. Let them be taught the principles of religion as their understanding opens, but the feeling of its reality will be best communicated by accustoming them to join in religious worship.

There are two things connected with this subject which appear to me amongst the most strange and unaccountable which have ever been exhibited in the world's history. One is, that in this nineteenth century, which boasts of its intellectual advancement, and progress in civilization and liberality, there are actually men of some intelligence and influence who deliberately desire to separate secular from religious education, who propose to bring up the mass of our people in the knowledge of the ordinary branches of instruction

to which I have adverted, but leave them altogether unprovided with religious training; and not only propose this unheard of scheme, but with great persistency advocate it, and endeavour to force it upon the country.

And the other fact, still more strange and unaccountable, is this, that in a Christian country, the very large majority of the inhabitants of which profess to be believers in Christianity, this most audacious proposal to deprive our population of the benefit of religious education should be for a moment listened to, and not scouted with an almost unanimous rejection. Even now, by the perseverance and artful manœuvres of the opponents of religion, much difficulty and discouragement is caused in a Church school. The notion is spread abroad that religious instruction, instead of being the chief, is of inferior importance to secular knowledge. It has been actually proposed that poor people, who cannot afford to pay for the education of their children, should be *compelled to send them to schools where their own religion is prohibited*. If it were not a fact which is stated in all our newspapers and reported in our parliamentary proceedings, one would think that such a proposal was a foolish joke or mistake. But there is no doubt the thing was really proposed, and at one time it was actually doubtful whether in a House consisting of between 500

and 600 members, nine-tenths of whom would have considered themselves worse than brutes if they did not bring up their own children as Christians, the proposal to educate the children of the poor without religion might not have been adopted by the majority. The atrocious scheme for banishing religion from our schools is but a counterpart of the attempt to prevent men from praying. All I can say is, if such schemes are allowed to succeed, heaven help the next generation! It requires no great power of prophecy to foretell that if religion is banished from our schools, and prayer from our churches, all our civilization, our science and philosophy, all law and order, our domestic peace and happiness, will be extinguished in a flood of anarchy and confusion.

P.S.—The friends of religion appear to me to have made a great mistake in allowing their opponents to form the nomenclature of education. I would venture to propose that for the future all Churchmen should discard the terms “denominational and secular,” and use the much more appropriate terms, “Christian” and “non-Christian” education.

CHAPTER XXIV.

LANGUAGE.—THE LANGUAGE OF THE BIBLE POPULAR AND
POETICAL, NOT PHILOSOPHICAL.

THERE are three sorts of language, if not many more,—Poetical, Popular, and Philosophical,—each style suited to its special matter. Suppose we wanted to describe the morning, Virgil would describe it as

“Tithoni croceum linquens Aurora cubile,”

that is, “Aurora leaves Tithonus’ saffron bed.” Aurora was the wife of Tithonus, and was very exact at getting up at the first dawn of day. Dryden says,

*“Now when the rosy Morn began to rise
And weave her saffron streamer through the skies.”*

Don Quixote would express himself, “The ruddy Phœbus begins to spread the golden tresses of his curly hair over the vast surface of the earthly globe.” Another poet would describe the opening of day as Phœbus yoking the foaming steeds

to his car. A philosopher on the other hand would say that the break of day was when the earth had revolved so far on its axis that the disk of the sun appeared above the horizon.

It is obvious that both these ways of expression would be very unsuitable to ordinary conversation. If you wished your friend to meet you at early morn, you would not say, "Meet me, my friend, when Aurora has left Tithonus' rosy bed," or "when Phœbus has yoked his horses," or "mind you get up in good time when the earth has so far revolved on its axis that the sun's disk appears above the horizon." You would say, "Meet me at sunrise," though you would be using an incorrect expression, because the sun never does rise.

Now the language of the Bible is often poetical, more frequently popular, but rarely philosophical. The eastern languages generally are highly poetical and figurative. The Psalms of David, and the books of some of the Prophets contain perhaps the most highly poetical language that was ever penned. See the nineteenth Psalm, beginning, "The heavens declare the glory of God. . . . In them hath He set a tabernacle for the sun, which cometh forth as a bridegroom out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a giant to run his course." This is, I think, a nobler passage than Virgil's about "Aurora's saffron couch," or Dry-

den's. So in the Prophet Malachi, "Unto you that fear My Name, the Sun of righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings."

I need not give any examples of the popular style, because almost the whole of the Bible, the historical part especially, is written in that style. It is a simple statement of facts, though here and there interspersed with orientalisms.

But I will select for our consideration a passage not really philosophical, but couched in philosophical language, and illustrative of the non-recognition of strictly philosophical terms when very little of philosophy was known to the people. It is from the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah. "Fear ye not Me? saith the LORD: will ye not tremble at My presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea, by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail: though they roar, yet can they not pass over it? But this people hath a revolting and rebellious heart." Here the lawlessness of the people is compared with the regular way in which the tides of the mighty ocean conform themselves to the laws which God has given them. It is a beautiful poetical illustration, but does not admit of exact application. In fact, the laws of Nature and the moral law of God are not strictly similar. Though both may be termed laws in

some sense, as being enacted by the Almighty, yet subjectively and in respect to the creatures who have to submit to them, there is an essential difference. In the one case there is a stringent necessity, in the other there is a free will which may or may not submit, and in the present case does not submit. The tides of the sea follow a certain law, if for want of a better expression we choose to call it so. They do God's bidding in a settled order, except when He chooses to change it. They cannot help going on at His command. They cannot help sinking to rest if He should choose to arrest their violence, as when our LORD on the sea of Tiberias said unto them, "Peace, be still." But man is gifted with free agency: he ought indeed to obey God's command as exactly as the earth in its orbit, or the tides in their course, but he has the power also, which they have not, to disobey. Yet the power which God exercises over the elements might teach him to fear One so mighty, and not revolt or rebel against One Who has the power to coerce or to destroy him. This is the bearing of the passage.

Perhaps there is no more striking instance of the regularity in which the laws of Nature are maintained by the great Creator than the tides. It was necessary to prevent an unhealthy stagnation of the great waters of the sea; and for this purpose it has been so arranged by the wise and

beneficent Creator that the combined influence of the sun and moon should draw the waters, as it were, "on an heap," sometimes more, sometimes less, so as to cause that wonderful phenomenon of the ebbing and flowing of the tide, and of the spring and neap tide, which presents at once a continual change, and yet a constant regularity. There is continual change in the tide in accordance with continual changes in the relative position of the sun and moon, and yet the change is within certain limits which cannot be passed. In the magnificent language of Job, God said to the sea, "Hitherto shalt thou come and no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." It is a striking illustration of the power of God which is open to the most uninstructed as well as to the most educated.

But now comes in the philosopher with his matter-of-fact, and objects that the description of the uniformity of the tide, and the unvariableness of the sea-line is not correct. There are places in the south of England, he will tell us, where the sea has receded two or three miles within the records of history. The Cinque Ports, which were once the principal harbours on that coast, some of them cannot be approached now. In other places the sea has gradually encroached upon the land. And not only so, but there are geological evidences on the coast of Scotland, (not to speak

of other parts of the world,) that there has been an alternate subsidence and elevation of the land ; so much so, that there are ranges of cliffs evidently once the line of the sea, which are now fifty or a hundred feet above high water level.

Now this is all perfectly true, and affords a good instance of the difference between popular and philosophical language. What is perfectly, nay strikingly true in a popular or poetical sense, may possibly not be exactly true in a philosophical sense. No one gifted with a spark of poetic feeling, nay, no one endowed with common understanding but must recognise the appositeness of the illustration of the might and unchangeableness of God contained in the words of the Prophet, in which He is represented as setting bounds to the sea, and controlling its fierce waves by His power. And yet there is no doubt that the sceptic, if he chooses to raise a cavil, may assert with truth that there is an inaccuracy of philosophical statement. And this is but an instance of many other passages, which nevertheless are not in the smallest degree incompatible with the truths of God's revealed Word. This is the way to explain a great number of passages in the Bible which are perfectly true in their real meaning, but not philosophically accurate.

There is another point connected with the language of Holy Scripture, which struck me as

very worthy of notice, when I recently saw it mentioned. Supposing that some great philosopher took upon himself to write a children's book, or explain some matter to an uneducated person,—he would use such plain and simple language as was suited to the capacity of the person for whose benefit he wrote or spoke,—and yet it would probably happen that under the garb of this simplicity, matters might crop out, so to speak, inadvertently, which would show that he was much more deeply acquainted with the subject than might at first have been supposed. Such appears to be the case in some parts of Scripture. Take the first chapter of Genesis. It is on the face of it a popular account of the work of creation adapted to the information of simple folk. And yet there appears incidentally allusion to matters which may convey information to the most advanced philosopher or divine. Not to speak however now of the allusion, which all divines recognise, to the doctrine of the plurality of Persons in the Blessed Trinity, there are also traces of a deeper knowledge of philosophy than some are apt to attribute to its inspired author. Until quite recently philosophers knew nothing from science of the order in which the animal world was created, while all the while the exact truth on the subject was contained in the Mosaic narrative. Even now they dispute about the

origin of life. Might they not place themselves at the feet of Moses, and learn from him that the impetus which first gave light and life to this inert chaotic mass of mingled land and sea from whence the earth emerged, was the Spirit of God. "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, and God said, Let there be light, and there was light." The Spirit of God was the true moving power which first produced light,—light gave the impulse by God's decree and providence to organic life.

Philosophers try very hard to account for the origin of things by the help of some self-evolving power, a notion which to me seems most unphilosophical, if only on the old established principle, "ex nihilo nil fit." I am inclined to think that the time will come when they will admit that Moses was beforehand with them in the true scientific account of Creation.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE FOOLISHNESS OF PREACHING.—ITS DIFFICULTY.—
PREACHING A GREAT INSTRUMENT FOR GOOD NOTWITH-
STANDING THE CAVILS OF THE WORLDLY.

“WHAT a good sermon we had to-day, mamma,” said a little boy, as he walked home with his mother from church. “My dear,” said the lady, “*all* sermons are good.” She meant of course that preaching is a good and holy institution, and that it is impertinent for little boys to criticise it. I fear the criticism of the world is not quite so respectful. People of the world often complain, and you may read the same complaints often in newspapers and periodicals, of the dulness of sermons. And you may see not unfrequently in congregations unmistakable evidence of persons being tired and unable to give their attention, staring about them, yawning or even sleeping; some people begin to gape even before the text is given out.

Now without doubt this feeling of weariness may arise from the deficiency of the preacher;

but it is also, still oftener perhaps, the fault of the hearer. The Apostle explains to us the reason why many persons take no interest in the preaching of the Gospel. "The natural man," he says, "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." There must be some sort of sympathy between the speaker and the hearer; or at least between the hearer and that which is addressed to him, or it is not possible for him to take in profitably what he hears. Present the most beautiful picture to a blind man and it is all one as if you placed before him a sheet of blank paper. The man without an ear for music cannot tell the most splendid anthems, operas, or oratorios, one from another. Just so it is with those whose spiritual eyes are blinded, and whose hearts are not attuned to the pure doctrine of the Gospel. It is simply uninteresting to them. They cannot understand it. Take for instance those gentlemen who report or write for newspapers, if they are not religious men. A person has been all the week listening to exciting speeches at public meetings, where the speakers vie with each other in endeavouring to amuse their audience, or he has been where the conflict of political opinion has been raging, and personal altercation has given zest to the debate, when first one speaker and

then another has striven by every art of rhetoric, whether fair or unfair, to influence the votes of his hearers, and present to the public the most favourable view of his case, and this amidst the cheers of his own party and contrary expressions of his opponents—or he has been listening in a Court of Justice to some curious and interesting trial, in which excitement is wrought up to the highest pitch, and the life of the criminal, or the decision of some great cause depends on each word elicited from the witnesses, or the eloquence of the counsel, or the summing-up of the judge; or he has been at a scientific lecture where some new and wonderful discovery has been described with the clearest philosophical precision.

After a week of excitement he goes, it may be, to some quiet parish church where one out of twenty thousand parish priests speaks to his congregation, as he has spoken for the last twenty years, not on some matter of worldly excitement, but on the simple subject of CHRIST Crucified, and things connected with it. CHRIST Crucified! in itself how grand a subject! in itself how worthy of deepest attention—no less than the way of eternal salvation, the means by which we may be happy for ever! But alas the demeanour of a congregation in listening to the preaching of the Gospel, even when it is earnestly and faithfully preached, is very different from that which

its intrinsic importance might seem to warrant. Though the subject of our address is the most momentous affair which can be brought before human beings, yet it is difficult to give it the character of reality and interest which is so necessary to rouse attention. Our message, though from heaven, is an oft told tale. The same persons have heard the same truths set forth week after week. The utmost that the preacher can accomplish is by some variety of argument or illustration to prepare the same heavenly food in a more palatable shape; and even then he will be listened to rather as one playing on a pleasant instrument, than as if he were speaking on a subject of vital importance. On other occasions of public speaking men come together with eager looks, and anxious minds to hear something in which they feel that they have a personal interest. But, strange to say, nothing is more difficult than to give the real business-like character to a sermon. One reason of this apathy is that the preacher speaks of things rather than persons. There is no personal collision—no excitement of opposition. And many of the most effectual instruments of oratory are forbidden. He must not rouse the passion of his hearers, nor flatter their vanity, nor give in to their prejudices. There is no place for sarcasm and invective, or personal attacks, or amusing anecdotes, or laughter-moving incidents.

All these spirit-stirring topics which are most agreeable to the natural man are excluded from the pulpit.

There is another consideration which operates to the disadvantage of the preacher. An ordinary church congregation is of all audiences the most promiscuous. High and low, rich and poor, educated and illiterate, all have to be instructed, convinced, persuaded. The preacher has to adapt his argument and language to the comprehension and edification of every class, not only in respect to external circumstances, but also as regards spiritual attainment. "It is no easy matter," as an old writer says, "to excite and awaken drowsy souls without terrifying and alarming some tender conscience—to bear home the conviction of sin without the appearance of personal reflection."

One more difficulty there is to which I should allude, namely, that the preacher's business is to create not only a powerful but a permanent effect—not barely cause a transient qualm of conscience, a momentary ebullition of feeling, but to make a lasting impression on the heart, and effect a corresponding change of conduct. This point is essential, and if we look at this point only, how far easier is the task of every other speaker than that of the preacher. The advocate has gained his point when he has obtained a verdict for his

client. It matters not what may be the opinion of the jury to-morrow. The speaker at the election, or convivial party, or public meeting has generally little more to do than to ingratiate himself with his partizans by expressing sentiments congenial with their own. When the last cheer has died away his task is done. But with the Christian preacher a permanent effect is everything. What he says to his congregation ought to have an influence for eternity.

Hence it is that the words of the preacher are so unimpressive to the "natural man"—the mere man of the world: they do not harmonize with his tone of thought, his feelings, his prejudices—they are foolishness to him. They do not furnish him with the excitement which he needs. His mind is set on earthly things—the pursuits of the world are to him all in all. The method of salvation, the doctrines and precepts of the Gospel have for him little charm. These are the sort of men who sneer at the preaching of the Gospel, ignorant all the while that the fault lies in their own inaptitude for spiritual things.

And yet there is another view of the preaching of the Gospel. "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." The despisers of preaching seem to forget that the preaching of the Gospel of CHRIST has in reality effected the greatest moral revolution which

the world ever witnessed. The first preachers of the Gospel literally "turned the world upside down." They reformed the barbarous customs of the Pagan world, closed the temples of the Heathen Gods, shut up the schools of philosophers. The doctrine which they taught is the basis of the civilization of modern society ; and though, to the ear of the sceptic, there may be little interest in the words of the preacher, and though there may be restless countenances and drowsy looks amongst many a congregation, yet it is most certain that the words of the preacher have often sunk deep into the heart of many a conscience-stricken sinner ; many a poor sinful man has gone home and fallen on his knees before God, and the sermon, much despised by the philosopher sceptic, has been the blessed means of converting that man from a life of sin to one of righteousness.

To take even a more ordinary common-place sort of view. It has been shrewdly remarked by a celebrated lawyer that the preachers of the Gospel have a great advantage in the privilege of addressing fifty thousand sermons to the people every year, *without the opportunity of a reply*. That is most true. To this circumstance we may attribute much of the permanency of the Christian faith and of whatever good conduct exists amongst us. What would be the state of this country, or of any country in the world, if the people had no

religious instruction, and were not reminded continually of death and judgment, and of their duties to God and man? We may form some notion if we look at the fearful state of some of our great towns, or of the condition of society where Christianity has been put down by popular violence. Imagine the condition of England under such a state of things. There would spring up a state of diabolical savagery such as the world has not hitherto witnessed. Oh, it is a blessing beyond price to be reminded once a week of God and of eternity, even if the preacher has not the gift of eloquence.

CHAPTER XXVI.

**FUTURE RETRIBUTION.—MOST CHARITABLE TO DECLARE IT
PLAINLY AS IT IS DECLARED IN THE BIBLE.**

NOTHING more irritates the philosophic sceptic than the doctrine of eternal punishment, especially punishment for unbelief. Nothing provokes louder protestations of aversion. We may be permitted to surmise that these protestations arise not unfrequently from a suspicion that there is only too much truth in what so much annoys them. Men seek by the loudness of their exclamation to pretend at least that they have no fear—as the countryman will shout and whistle as he passes by the village churchyard, or as the child will keep up his courage by singing in the dark.

But the philosopher should at least refrain from feelings of irritation against God's ministers who remind him of these truths. He should consider that if the terrors of the judgment are, as Christian divines verily believe, most true, it would be an act of the greatest injustice and cowardice if,

for fear of disapproval, they in any way concealed them. The Gospel of the LORD JESUS CHRIST is indeed a dispensation of mercy—tidings of great joy, a message of forgiveness and reconciliation, the love of GOD to man; yes, it is all this—every page of the Gospel abounds in love. And yet in no part of Holy Scripture is there such severe denunciation of GOD's wrath against sin, nowhere such stern threatenings of judgment against the impenitent. Not even the most vehement of the ancient prophets used stronger language of severity against the wicked, than that which proceeds out of the mouth of the merciful JESUS. "Woe unto you, Pharisees, hypocrites," He says, "ye fools and blind Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how shall ye escape the damnation of hell?" So in the description of the last judgment, "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." The Apostles use the same language. S. Paul speaks with special severity against those who pervert the Gospel of CHRIST, "There be some," he says, "that trouble you and pervert the Gospel of CHRIST. But though an angel from heaven preached any other Gospel to you than that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed." At the end of his First Epistle to the Corinthians he actually takes the pen from his amanuensis and writes with his own hand,—

“If any man love not the LORD JESUS, let him be Anathema, Maran-atha. The grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST be with you. My love be with you all in CHRIST JESUS, Amen.” The greater his love for the brethren, the stronger is his language of denunciation against those who seduce them from the love of God.

Now what I would ask of those who talk of want of charity and bigotry, and so forth, is whether a minister of the Gospel or any serious Christian, who really believes that this is the language of inspiration, and that the souls of men are to be judged according to God’s Word, and yet suppresses or softens down God’s declarations of eternal wrath against sin, can escape the charge of hypocrisy or cowardice.

It is easy enough to understand how the present morbid feeling on the subject has sprung up. In an age of unexampled wealth and prosperity, men have become so immersed in the pursuits of this life, so wholly taken up with its pleasures, and comforts, and excitements, that they cannot bear to be reminded of the time when their enjoyments will have an end, and they will have to give a strict account of the deeds done in the flesh. The curses of God on the impenitent, the eternal pains of hell, seem to them words unsuited to ears polite. They do not like to have the subject pressed upon them, and seek for arguments

to explain it away. It is not to be wondered at that men who have given their souls to mere worldly philosophy, and put from them the belief in God's revealed Word, should find arguments to convince those who desire to be convinced. But it is marvellous that men who have accepted God's commission to preach the Gospel should dare to deny or explain away the very doctrines which they have pledged themselves to teach. The Church, more faithful than some of her ministers, shrinks not from plainly setting forth God's curses as well as His blessings. "Cursed is he that removeth his neighbour's landmark," whether literally, or by unsettling his belief in spiritual truth. "Cursed is he that maketh the blind to go out of his way"—a fearful warning to the clever man of the world, who recklessly suggests doubts and difficulties to the unlearned. "Cursed are the unmerciful, fornicators, adulterers, covetous persons, idolaters, slanderers, drunkards, and extortioners." Good men do not sufficiently show their indignation against those who go about corrupting the faith of the unsuspecting. Intellect and wealth are the great idols of the day. If a man has secured to himself an abundance of this world's wealth, and contributes to the amusement and vanity of his neighbour, too little is thought of his religious character. So even more strikingly in the so-called world of

intellect, there is far too little account made of this most vital point. The ingenious sceptic, the man who takes a perverse delight in placing revelation and science in apparent discrepancy—the man who scruples not to promulgate anti-Christian theories, which, though confessedly unsupported by ascertained facts, he blurts forth with hardy unconcern whether they be tenable, or, after all, exploded as nonsense, and in the meantime, with a selfish carelessness of the ruin which he may cause to immortal souls by his rash speculation, enjoys the applause of men as reckless and frivolous as himself,—these, and such as these, if they are only clever, are welcomed with the same favour, as those who by their well-regulated talents are doing God service, and advancing the true interest of the human race.

In declaring God's eternal wrath against sin and unbelief, we must not allow the caviller the advantage of saying that the Apostle, and those who accept his words as truth, condemn to God's eternal reprobation all those in every country and in every age of the world who do not think exactly as they do themselves. We are bound to accept with faith and humble gratitude the terms of God's unbounded mercy in CHRIST. But there have been, and still are, millions of the earth's inhabitants who have never heard of CHRIST. How can such as these believe without hearing,

and how can they love Him of whom they have not heard? Evidently the denunciations of Scripture cannot apply to them—they have a law unto themselves. If they have no part in the salvation of the faithful, so neither have they any part in the condemnation of unbelievers. There may be, even in a Christian land, many who come under the same category as heathens. We cannot say. But in all appearance there are many so adversely circumstanced that, though no doubt they have heard the Name of CHRIST uttered, perhaps in blasphemy, yet morally the alternative has never been presented to them of accepting or not accepting CHRIST as their SAVIOUR. No; the Apostle is evidently speaking of those who have known CHRIST intellectually, yet put Him from them, or love Him not—men who have been called, yet reject the calling—men to whom the preaching of the Gospel is foolishness—disputers of this world—wise men, who, with all their wisdom, know not God—the “natural man, who receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God”—men of carnal minds—wise men, taken in their own craftiness—men who have just cleverness enough to persuade themselves to be infidels—men who, having had CHRIST and the Resurrection preached to them, cavil at God’s revelation, and ask, “How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?”—philosophic infidels

—men of Sadducean mind. It is a fearful and humiliating thought that all such as these are classed in the same condemnation as “the unrighteous, fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, thieves, covetous, drunkards,” and such like. It is a lamentable truth that pride of intellect, not less than grosser sins, should thus involve men in hopeless condemnation; yet there can be no question of it, according to the plain Word of God.

What an alternative for the proud, highly-informed, enlightened man of the present day—the despiser of the Church’s holy faith, the liberal tolerater of all denominations, who looks upon Christian doctrine as something which men may receive or reject as they please, and either turns from it altogether, or frames a creed for himself accepting such doctrines as appear to him reasonable, and despising others—what a humiliating alternative for such an one to be told that rejecting the Catholic faith, refusing to believe the Gospel he must without doubt perish everlastingly; or, if he escape eternal wrath it can only be through the loopholes of invincible ignorance or involuntary prejudice! Yet such, if God’s Word is true, such, if the Church founded by the Apostles have not altogether erred—such unquestionably is the only alternative whereby those persons can in any way be saved who

reject or disbelieve the truth as it is revealed by God.

Even so the philosophers of ancient Greece, intellectual, highly accomplished, full of knowledge and learning—these men looked on the Cross of CHRIST as foolishness, contemned the doctrine of CHRIST's messengers, and perished in their sin. How many able, accomplished, philosophical men are there in the present day who are in like danger ! How many who are loudest in their complaint about the ignorance and vices of the poor, are yet entirely blind to their own ! How many even who pay great attention to schemes of philanthropy, promoters of education, and other plans of utility, yet, because they reject God's eternal Truth, the doctrines of that Gospel which CHRIST revealed, and which the Church has taught must, without hope, without remedy, perish ; unless—unless, O strange and hazardous alternative ! CHRIST should plead before the FATHER for their forgiveness, on account of the gross impenetrable darkness in which their souls were involved !

This is one of the most difficult tasks of the Christian minister—to preach a doctrine so unpopular, so paradoxical, yet so unquestionably true. And not only to preach it in the pulpit, but to show elsewhere that he looks with a sad, uncordial aspect on those, however high in sta-

tion, exalted in intellect, admirable even in their philanthropy, who are aliens to the Christian faith, viewing them as men who, in spite of their talents and advantages, are not doing the LORD's work in their generation, but rather thwarting it, and if they repent not and accept the terms of the Gospel, must, through God's just sentence, perish everlastingly.

CHAPTER XXVII.

UNRESTRAINED INQUIRY LEADS TO THE MOST OPPOSITE RESULTS.—THE INTELLECTUAL POWERS OF MAN NEED RELIGION FOR THEIR DEVELOPMENT.—THE LABOURER, THE MERCHANT, THE STATESMAN, THE PHILOSOPHER.

I REMEMBER at the beginning of the "Church movement" some forty years ago, when great zeal sprang up for "Church principles," and many subjects of thought, which had been well-nigh forgotten were revived, the more cautious men endeavoured somewhat to restrain the impetuosity of their friends, suggesting that they were wandering into dangerous fields of inquiry. I remember myself writing a very urgent letter on the subject to Archbishop Manning—before his secession—but to no effect. The usual answer was that it was the duty of all men to follow after truth whithersoever it might take them, and not shrink from any inquiry, or any phase of thought or action which might lead to it. The result was, that after a few years some of the leading men of the movement became Ultramontanes.

A similar process is going on in the domain of science. Philosophers assert that the first duty of man is inquiry after truth at all events. "Not to inquire," says a very moderate writer, "was possible for our forefathers, but is not possible for us. With our intellectual growth has come an irrepressible anxiety to possess the highest truth attainable by us. The desire is not sinful, not presumptuous, but really one of the best and purest of our instincts, being nothing else than the sterling honesty of the intellect seeking the harmony of discordant truth."¹ Yet we know that this sort of thing has led not a few in recent times to Atheism or infidelity.

Here is a curious phase of the human mind. The same principle of unrestrained, it may be conscientious inquiry after truth, has made some men infidels and some Ultramontanes. And these men of the highest intellect in their respective departments. The leading men among the Roman Catholics in this country, and some of the foremost philosophers of the day, have been brought by the very same principle of following, as they supposed, the path of truth, to diverge to the most opposite points of intellectual position. How do we account for this? It is quite clear that inquiry after truth, good as it must be

¹ See "The Intellectual Life," by Philip Gilbert Hamerton, p. 211.

confessed to be in itself, yet may be productive of evil. How is this ?

First, it is the law of Nature, or rather the ordainment of God's Providence that what is good will, if unrestrained, run out to vicious excess. "'Tis good to have a giant's strength, but not to use it as a giant." Money is a good thing—all of us have to seek for the means of subsistence ; but if we rush into the pursuit of wealth with such unrestrained eagerness as to make gold our idol, we fall away to moral degradation. Strong drink is good, "wine maketh glad the heart of man," but we know that thousands of our labouring men are ruining body and soul by drunkenness.

The truth is that in all things, even in the pursuit of knowledge, there is need of ballast ; there is need of moral restraint to control the intellectual impulse. What says the wise man in praise of wisdom, "Wisdom is the principal thing, therefore get wisdom. . . . Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding." And he adds elsewhere, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom."

Let the philosopher of the present day well consider this. It is the secret of intellectual as well as moral culture. It is most true, as I have myself heard excellent men of science affirm, that

we ought to follow after truth wheresoever it leads us,—but then we must have the fear of God for our ballast, or we shall fall into the extremes of infidelity or fanaticism. The intellect of man without this fear of God as a principle of action, is so weak, and temptation to evil is so universally present, even in purely intellectual pursuits, that we shall surely fall into grievous error, if our hearts are not guided by the fear of the LORD, that is, the true religious principle.

Now is the boasted knowledge of the present day built on the fear of God? Is there not on the contrary in too many a careless neglect, or presumptuous rejection of all that appertains to the fear of God; a vain reliance on their own powers,—a leaning to their own understanding,—a sort of half unwilling acknowledgment that religion may be all very well in its own proper department, but that it is misplaced when it interferes with intellectual pursuits?

By the fear of God we are not to understand a slavish and superstitious dread of God. It is a very different thing from superstition; it is most worthy of a rational, free, and intelligent being. It is a reverence and veneration for Him on account of His wisdom, power, and goodness; an acknowledgment of His superintending Providence. To live in the fear of God is to go through life, not with a continual apprehension of God's

wrath, but with a perpetual assurance of His goodness. In short, the fear of the LORD is the religious feeling of a good man. It is the groundwork of the right reason of an intelligent being. In Christian language it is much the same as faith,—faith as distinguished from superstition on the one hand, and scepticism on the other.

It is religion that gives us a just estimate of our real condition in the world. It alone can conquer the inherent pride of the human heart, and enable us to think humbly of ourselves as we ought to think. It has been most truly said, that “the greatest wisdom may often be to know our own ignorance.”

Religion alone can subdue those angry passions and violent lusts which destroy our natural sense of right and wrong. What is the cause of all the wrong-headedness, obstinacy, folly and madness of the world around us? Spring they not from the domination of evil passions which pervert and obscure the judgment? How utterly incompetent is a man under the influence of a master passion to judge rightly or consult wisely. What absurd arguments do men bring forward,—how unable are they to discern what is right and wrong when swayed by the violent counsels of party spirit or prejudice. It is religion alone which can calm the turbulent waves which rage and swell in our hearts, and say to the tempest

of excited passions, Peace, be still. It is religion alone which can dispel the selfishness inherent in the human heart, and teach us that true wisdom consists in foregoing our own selfish advantages, and loving our neighbours as ourselves.

All these qualities which are essential to the free and unbiassed use of our reason, and the exercise of useful practical wisdom—religion, or the fear of God alone can give.

And how does the fear of God enlarge the sphere of man's intellectual vision. It places before him a multitude of high and holy topics, of which he who fears not God is entirely ignorant and incompetent to judge. Look at the husbandman whose daily occupation is to till the earth,—how low in the scale of intellectual beings is that man, if he knows not God, and cares only to satisfy the cravings of his natural appetites! how little superior is he to the swine which feed under the oak tree without ever looking up to know from whence their food was sent. But let that man be instructed in the fear of God, let the truths of the Bible be unfolded to him, let him give his soul to the influence of religion,—what a change is wrought in his whole inner man! How is his whole soul enlarged! How does his very occupation, otherwise so dry and barren, so toilsome and tedious, serve to impress upon him the wonders of God's Providence,

when He sends the former and the latter rain, and maketh the sun to shine, and the seed to germinate, and the ear to fill. What a different intellect is his from that of the mere sensual animal who eats, and drinks, and sleeps, and works, and knows not God.

Look at the tradesman or merchant; see him first poring over his ledger and day-book, his mind wholly given to buying and selling, computing his losses and profits. What a life of sordid drudgery is this without religion. But suppose that man, by Divine grace, to be influenced by the fear of God, behold an expansive field of intellectual acquirement opened to him. What a noble range of speculation for the mind, what sublime, what soul-inspiring topics to dwell on in comparison with the dry details in which his soul was before wrapped up. What a relief after the tedious business of worldly gain to hold communion with God, and ponder on His word and works. This indeed is true wisdom, "The merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold."

Look again at the statesman: consider first the narrow-minded party politician, how utterly unable is he to distinguish between the real good of his country, and the petty interests of his political faction. He regards not his fellow-countrymen as beings endowed with immortal

imperishable souls. He regards them in the masses, as instruments for increasing the nation's wealth, or supporters or opposers of this or that system of policy. He thinks not of them as "brethren for whom CHRIST died," heirs of immortality, aspirants to equality with the angels. Alas for the nation whose interests are placed in the hands of men who know not God!

But picture to yourselves the statesman whose soul is enlarged by the fear of God. What a different intellect do we behold. How far nobler a view does he take of a nation's good. His object is to make the nation over which God has placed him more moral, more religious, more fit for God's eternal kingdom. He will not pander to the people's passions, but makes the law of God his rule of conduct. He takes his straightforward unbending course of highest duty, firmly trusting that God will prosper that which is undertaken and finished in His Name.

Once more, look at the philosopher who knows not God,—cannot even "think" of Him,—regards the material world as under no providential rule, but carried on by some fate or blind necessity—who knows not whence he came, or whither he goes after this life,—imagines that man—intellectual man—was developed from an ape, and after this life is resolved into his original elements, and lives no more,—why what a mean

and miserable view of things is this. Contrast with it the glorious revelations of the blessed Word of God—which tells us of man, formed in the image of God, redeemed from sin and death, —a place prepared for him in the kingdom of heaven.

Thus in every department of life religion, or the fear of God, is the grand enlightener of the human intellect, the source of all true wisdom. In short, a man without religion is but half a man, intellectually—morally he is a good deal worse than nothing.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

PROGRESS.—ARTS AND SCIENCE MAY ADVANCE INDEFINITELY, BUT CHRIST'S TRUE RELIGION REMAINS THE SAME ALWAYS.

A CURIOUS fallacy has sprung up in the minds of modern philosophers, namely, that because the world has lately made great advancement in art and science, therefore it must needs have made great advancement in other things. It is easy to perceive at once that this is a logical *non sequitur*; yet it may be well to give our thoughts to a consideration of the matter.

There can be no question that the age we live in has made a wonderful start forward in the knowledge of material objects. In truth, unless a generation of men were very stupid indeed they *must* always be advancing onwards in this department, because each generation has the advantage of the attainments of those who have gone before it, and is continually building on the foundation which they have laid. As Professor Small well said at the recent meeting of the British Association, "It was not too much to say that without

the treatise of the Greek geometer on conic sections there would have been no Kepler—without Kepler no Newton, and without Newton no science in our modern signification, at least no such conception of nature as now lay at the basis of all our science of nature, as subject in its smallest as well as its greatest phenomena to exact quantitative relation, and to definite numerical laws.” Unless indeed there should be some breaking up of the framework of society, some period of convulsion, or of darkness, the human mind will be always adding to its store of knowledge. There was a period after the destruction of the Roman Empire by the Gothic nations, when the advancement almost ceased, nay, the world went back rather than forward. Arts which had been known to the ancient world were forgotten, most of its literature perished, and, unless the Church had kept alive the lamp of learning and science, knowledge would have died out and become almost extinguished. So it would be if the present system of society were broken up by revolution and anarchy; there would be a temporary cessation of the progress of art and science and all things. The advance of atheism would be a reaction towards ignorance.

The great advance of the present age is in science and those arts which depend on science. When once the art of printing was discovered and

generally used, the publication of books was multiplied and increased rapidly, until we have arrived at the present astonishing development of literature. So when the power of steam was ascertained, its wondrous capabilities were soon applied to the variety of objects for which it is now used in manufactures, commerce, and locomotion. There seems no end of the uses to which it may be applied. The discovery and great improvement of the telescope and microscope enabled men to make new and marvellous discoveries both in the grandeur and minuteness of the material world.

Resulting from the advancement of science has been the development of those arts which minister to the temporal well-being of the present generation. The constantly increasing number of families who enjoy the blessings of competency, the rapid erection of comfortable dwellings, and, even in the poorest families where moderate thrift and prudence are exercised, the enjoyment of many comforts which were unknown to former generations.

But because we have attained acknowledged superiority in these matters, does it therefore follow that we are wiser or better than our fathers in other respects? Because science has taught us to rule the elements, are we better able to rule our own passions and curb the madness of the

people? Because improved art and machinery supply our dwellings with comforts and conveniences unknown to former ages, are our minds therefore better stored with moral wisdom, or our conduct to God and our neighbour better ordered? The mechanic who governs by his skill the great power of the steam engine, is he on that account more skilled in the guidance of the social machine, or one whit more practically versed in the power of God over the moral universe? Surely no comparison can be drawn between subjects wide as the poles asunder. No; let us concede to the present generation all the praise which it deserves for enlarging the boundaries of science, and advancing the arts to unknown perfection, but let us not vainly suppose that we are wiser or better than our forefathers in matters unconnected with the department of either art or science.

There are a good many drawbacks to the advantages conferred on the world by the advancement of art and science. Enervating luxury amongst the rich, improvidence, and consequent suffering amongst the poor, these sadly mar the blessings which Providence has showered upon us. Then again, the skill and energy which have enabled men of the present day to increase so largely the comforts of peace, have also developed in at least an equal degree the arts of war. It is a sad reflection that as much ingenuity and skill

and energy should be devoted to improve the implements of destruction, as to increase the comforts of life—to construct iron-clad batteries, enormously destructive guns, arms calculated to destroy the greatest number of our fellow-creatures, in the smallest possible time. Take again the immense mass of information spread by the art of printing amidst our teeming population. What is the source of the supposed information which the majority of men possess? Is it not notorious that it is derived from the daily and weekly press, journals, pamphlets, magazines, reviews, “Penny Awfuls,” &c. Can any more copious fountain of error be conceived? Is it not notorious that the press—especially the lower kind of the periodical press—is a most mendacious source of information? Of course there are many excellent and trustworthy publications. But what must we say of the organs of parties? Is it not their daily business to inflame the passions, flatter the vanity, and pander to the appetites of their own particular readers? What perversion, what misstatement, what exaggeration, what wilful falsehood, what absurd ignorance! and this is the fountain from which streams the boasted intelligence of the present generation. Alas for our ignorance and delusion! We may talk of the superstitious credulity of our uneducated forefathers, we may sneer at their veneration for old-

established usages, and laugh at their belief in witchcraft. I will venture to say without the slightest qualification that never was there an age in which the mass of mankind listened to falsehood with such implicit credulity—such utter prostration of intellect—never was there an age in which so many barefaced lies were published and believed as the present.

But I am wandering rather from my subject, which was to show that the great increase of knowledge in arts and science which exists in the present day, does not imply a large advance in matters unconnected with art and science, in fact, that there are many things which have not advanced at all, but have rather retrograded. Take by way of illustration the art of sculpture. Sculpture is the delineation in marble of the highest beauties of the human form. In ancient Greece where great attention was paid to the graceful development of the limbs, which were much more exposed to view than they are at present; the art of sculpture arrived at once at its highest excellence, so that no modern sculptors have attained the same proficiency in their art as Phidias and Praxiteles. Take again the art of language; no one pretends that any modern language comes up to the excellency of the Greek; and language is no inconsiderable test of acuteness of intellect. So in poetry. I venture to think that Tenny-

son and Browning cannot compete with Homer and Æschylus.

You see then that advancement in all things is not at all the property of the present age. We have advanced there is no doubt in arts and science, but then there are other things in which we have rather retrograded.

All that I have said tends to the question whether in the highest department of human excellence—that is religion—we can be said to have advanced or retrograded. Is a good Christian now a different sort of man from a good Christian in the time of S. Paul and the Apostles, or is he not precisely the same? Was it not possible for a Christian to attain to the highest excellence of his calling in the first ages of Christianity? As the Greek sculptor was able to delineate the perfect form of human symmetry, such as no future ages could surpass, so was not the perfect stature of the Christian attained, so far as it is attainable at all, in the first ages of the Gospel? I think there cannot be more than one answer—that the Apostles of our Lord and many of the early converts attained at least as high excellence of moral virtue as any of those who have lived in later ages.

And if so, then I have a further question to ask, namely, what was the cause of this excellence—but their reception in its integrity of the perfect law of God, the bringing their hearts into sub-

jection to the Christian doctrine? From whence it follows that Christianity itself was from the beginning perfect and entire, wanting nothing, and that the notion of religious knowledge developing itself, like modern art and science, is perfectly untenable. God revealed Himself in CHRIST in all His perfection. The notion that modern science can unfold to us a more perfect knowledge of God than the Bible does, is untrue. As individuals indeed we should be continually aiming at greater excellence, greater conformity to the holy Will of God, and the perfect example of our SAVIOUR. We should take the energy and zeal of the man of science as examples for ourselves. The same energy and perpetual progress which distinguish the philosopher should be aimed at by each one of us in the concerns of his soul. We should never be content with low attainment, always aspiring after something better, some advancement in our spiritual state. We should be continually subduing within us everything inconsistent with our Christian calling, and advancing onward in the course toward perfection.

You see then that in this point of view the Christian course is eminently one of progress. If we admire the energy of the men of the present generation, applaud their discoveries and recognize the necessity of continual advancement; if

we would advance the well-being of the generation in which we live, we should be constantly endeavouring to increase the influence of true religion whether national or personal, constantly pulling down the strong holds of sin, and building up the fabric of CHRIST's holy religion around and within us.

It will perhaps be said that though the Gospel may have been delivered full and entire at first, yet that the labours of learned men are very valuable to elucidate and explain religious truth. Yes, but their object is not to improve what is perfect, but simply to bring it back to its original excellence. When the Bishops of the Church assembled at Nicæa their object was not to construct anything anew, but to bear testimony as to what had been the belief of the Church from the beginning. So at the Reformation: the professed object was to restore the Church to its original excellence. And so in this present day the object of learned men is not to add to the Gospel, but to restore manuscripts to their original purity, to discover what was the meaning of those from whom we have received them, to ascertain the mind of the Prophets and Apostles, and of Him by whose inspiration they wrote. Human science may advance onward continually. Human art may go on from one degree of per-

fection to another—but Eternal Truth never changes. The Gospel is like its Divine Author, “JESUS CHRIST, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.”

Note.—I would not be understood to contradict the sentiments so eloquently expressed by Canon Lightfoot in the debate on “Theological Thought” at the recent Congress at Bath. “The great truths of revealed religion remain in themselves the same from age to age. But an apprehension of them and an appreciation of them, an application of them to the emergent needs of the individual and of society, in the more complex and trying circumstances of modern times may and ought to vary, and that in the direction of ever-increasing growth, and grateful realization.”

What I maintain is, that Christian doctrine and principle and Christian character are one and the same always; though they must of course be adapted to the ever-varying needs of the human family—and this, not as some seem to expect, by bending or giving way to the supposed discoveries of philosophy—but by the mild and efficacious persuasion of Christian Truth in its various aspects, bringing all, whether learned or unlearned, under the influence of Christian principles and salvation through the blessed Gospel. This is very different from what was said by Prebendary Gale, that “Theology has no finality. It is never the same; it is absolutely endless; it is fresh every morning; it requires a new interpretation every year we live.” These sentiments I am happy to say were received by the assembly with “No” and laughter.

CHAPTER XXIX.

CONCLUSION.

As I began, so I conclude, by expressing my earnest wish that men who seem intended by nature, or rather by God's Providence to work together for the glory of God, could be brought to unite in the service of Him Who gave them all the gifts which they possess. It is the bounden duty and the high office of God's priests to win men to the knowledge of the truth, and induce them to rule their lives in obedience to His laws. Scarcely less noble and divine is the work of the true philosopher, to investigate the wonders of God's creation, and explain its marvels. Why cannot men, bound together as it would seem by such a chain of love and high emprise, work harmoniously in the great path of duty which is set before them?

I fear there are some—a few, I would fain hope—who deliberately and of fixed purpose set themselves to oppose God's ministers; and that under a false notion that they are in some way throwing impediments in the path of science.

But surely it is an altogether mistaken thought. Even if they would, the clergy have not the power to check the march of science in her grand discoveries, nay, rather, they would willingly hail philosophy as their best ally in winning men to a knowledge of God's glorious works. It is one of the most unfortunate circumstances of the day, that some men of science should have taken up these atheistical opinions. I really do not think they are more than some half-score, but then they are leading men; and others equally or more able let them have their way far more than they ought, instead of protesting against them, and making them ashamed. In the case of such persons as these, who wilfully oppose the truth, God's ministers have no alternative. They would basely desert their post, if they did not first endeavour to set before the opponents of the truth, the fatal issue to themselves of the course which they are pursuing, in the hope of yet, by God's mercy, winning them to His service. And if they fail, then, by all means in their power they must warn those who are in danger of being deceived by them, against the fallacies and false doctrines which are put before them. This I have endeavoured to do with plainness and earnestness of speech,—and I pray God that my words may not be altogether in vain.

I have carefully endeavoured to avoid the ex-

ample of those philosophers who allow themselves to use the most insulting expressions against the clergy as a class. Whenever I have spoken strongly, it is simply against the doctrines of those mistaken men, who, in my conscience, I believe are destroying the souls of those for whom **CHRIST** died.

But there is another class to whom, in a great measure, my words of remonstrance are addressed. I mean those excellent and able men, who have no intention whatever of forsaking their religion in the pursuit of science—or of leading others to unbelief in **God's Word**—and yet do, unwittingly but most seriously, damage the cause of truth, by seeming to side with its enemies. These are men of science, eminent in their department, and they are also Christians. What I grieve for is, that they should seem to forsake their brethren in the faith, and side with the enemies of **God**. Surely their Christianity is of greater moment than their philosophy; one is but material, the other spiritual; one is temporal, the other for eternity. I would appeal to men of science who are really Christians, to range themselves, more decidedly than they do, on the **LORD's** side, not to suffer the interests of their worldly pursuit to bias them against those who are doing the **LORD's** work. It is possible that instances may be quoted in which priests, more zealous than well-informed,

have thwarted the discoveries of men of science—as in the often quoted case of Galileo—though I confess I never heard of a similar instance of persecution for science' sake, while it is notorious that thousands of Christian martyrs have perished for religion's sake. But there is no disposition in the present day to check the discoveries of science, and no power, if any one desired, to do so. Let men of science put from them this unworthy jealousy.

But it is not only to men of science that I would address myself, but generally to the men of intelligence and culture. We all acknowledge, at least all Christians acknowledge, that there is a great spiritual battle to be fought in the world between good and evil. Every human soul is engaged in the conflict. We are bound to fight manfully as sworn soldiers of the cross. But there are some who have deserted their colours, and what is still worse, do all they can to induce others to desert. I do say, without hesitation, that it is the duty of every Christian who has a grain of faith in his SAVIOUR, to set himself against such men, and discourage and counteract their proceedings. What is the value of all these discoveries in art and science? what is the worth of the most important of material and worldly interests, if they are leading men away from their faith in CHRIST, and their allegiance to their

GOD ? It is notorious and undeniable that there are men of science who are working, as we Christians believe, for the damnation of souls. I say that such men should be shrunk from with aversion. If indeed we can by any means induce them to desist from their ungodly endeavours, it is our duty in charity to aid them ; but if they persist in spreading opinions which we in our conscience believe to be ruining souls, and tending to the destruction of all that we love and value even in this world, it does seem to be the very height of moral cowardice and folly to countenance—nay, even flatter men like them, who, if suffered to go on in their present course, bid fair to revolutionize society both morally and physically, and bring the world back to savagery and anarchy.

I pray God to avert such threatening calamity, and beseech all earnest men to weigh the words which I have spoken, and aid in the promotion of what they verily believe to be God's Truth.

It is not that we clergy claim the right to interfere with men's opinions otherwise than by persuasion. Politically and individually men may hold what opinions they choose, on their own responsibility. What we complain of is, that these men are interfering with us, and with those whom God has commissioned us to instruct in the way of Truth—that by rash and false specula-

tions they are leading them to ruin, bringing in notions which will lead to the most deplorable results in the world, and spreading through the the social system "a monstrous and melancholy atheism."

Surely it is our bounden duty to raise our voice, if possible, in language as strong and uncompromising as that of the ancient prophets of Israel—or in whatever way we may hope to obtain a hearing—to use our best endeavours, by the help of God, to oppose and check this unhappy tendency, and to rescue the souls committed to our charge from the dangers which have invaded them ; and to call on all right-minded persons to aid us by all the means in their power to rescue society from this direfully impending calamity.

I am quite aware that in the foregoing papers there are some things which will displease sceptical or unbelieving philosophers, and if they are ill-tempered, as well as unbelieving, they will throw the book away in a rage. But it is impossible to write with equal force and propriety with different objects in view. My object is not so much to win unbelievers, as to warn others against them. If my chief object had been to conciliate unbelievers, I might have omitted some topics on which I have insisted. I might have refrained from quoting against them the uncourteous and contemptuous language which they use towards

the clergy. I might have thought it better not to jest on some of the notions which have been adopted by certain modern philosophers, but which appear to most people to be supremely ridiculous. But if I had omitted these topics, I should have missed the principal object which I have in view, which is to warn the unwary, but perhaps well-meaning persons of the present day, against the danger which lurks under modern speculations, if they be not conducted in the fear of God. One of the worst features of the times is the way in which clever men are flattered without reference to their principles. I have endeavoured conscientiously to avoid this error, and to speak in true and righteous terms both of the great value of philosophy, rightly so called, and the extreme wrong done by those who prostitute it to atheistic uses ; and at the same time to show that the salvation of souls and the honour of God, are the highest and noblest objects of human endeavours.

Philosophy falsely so called—the hater and opponent of Christianity, is an evil thing—as the Apostle says, “earthly, sensual, devilish.”

True philosophy, springing from “meekness of wisdom,” the ally and promoter of God’s eternal Truth, is excellent and honourable in the sight of God and man.

NOTE A. (P. 73.)

DESCENT OF MAN.

Two arguments have lately struck me as strongly contradicting the notion of man's evolution from an ape. Some philosophers are fond of asserting the slight difference which they suppose exists between the lowest savage and the highest ape. The natives of Tierra del Fuego are cited as the lowest degree of savages—the gorilla as the highest ape. Not many years ago a ship touched at Tierra del Fuego, and took on board three Fuegians, who, at first savage and uncouth, became after a few weeks quite tame and tractable. Does any one suppose that the gorillas would have become tame and civilized? No. M. de Chaillu mentions that he attempted to domesticate a young gorilla, but it was perfectly untameable—it bit and flew at every one that approached, and died from the effects of its passion. These may be taken as instances of the relative behaviour of the rational man and irrational brute. Monkeys may not always be so fierce and untameable; still they never make the smallest approach to reason or civilization.

The other argument to which I alluded was one used by the Archbishop of York in his sermon at the Bradford meeting of the British Association. The nearer an ape may approach in physical conformation to a man, the more strong is the evidence that rationality in man does not proceed from physical organization, or any material source; for then the monkeys and apes would approach more nearly to man in intelligence than dogs and elephants, which they do not. No: reason is entirely distinct from the instinct of brutes—it is a gift of God conferred solely on man, and on no other animal.

The Evolution theory in its most extreme phase, that is, the notion that all creation was evolved out of a single seed or monad, reminds one irresistibly of "Jack and the Bean-stalk." Jack sowed a bean which sprang up and grew so rapidly that when he climbed up one fine day he found a whole brood of giants with all sorts of appurtenances evolved out of it. So the extreme Evolutionists imagine that the animal and vegetable organisms which we see around us have been evolved from a single germ.

Truly this sort of evolution might be called the "Bean-stalk Theory."

NOTE B. (P. 110.)

GERMAN METAPHYSICS.

One would have thought that the position, "Cogito, ergo sum, (I think, therefore I am,) could not be disputed, but it appears that the modern sceptics of Germany are not willing to admit even so much as that. But it may be doubted, as Dean Mansel says, whether German philosophy can be made intelligible to an Englishman. "The very authority to which an Englishman appeals in support of his instinctive beliefs, [i. e., Common Sense,] is regarded by his transcendental kinsman as an impostor and simpleton."

"The first law of all thought, the primary condition without which all subsequent reason falls to the ground, is the assumption that everything is itself, $A=A$ "—I am I—or "the ego posits itself."

"The distribution of the universe in which German philosophy especially rejoices is the Ego and Non Ego, das Ich und das Nicht Ich—that is, myself and everything else."

But how can I know that I exist, that this is the ego at all? "Cogito, ergo sum," (I think, therefore I am,) says Descartes. No, answers Fichte, that is no proof; you can only say, "Cogito, ergo *videor esse*," (I think therefore I seem to be).

Besides, when you say, I think, it implies a thinking being; what I want is the ego without the cogito. Cogito is the self manifested in consciousness; but what is the self without consciousness? In so much as I am conscious, I have a mere phenomenal existence; what is required is the absolute, unconditioned, I by myself I. In truth the real self is an unknown and unknowable something.

Such is a specimen of modern German philosophy. Those who should happen to wish to know more about it, may be referred to Dean Mansel's lecture on "Modern German Philosophy" in his recently published "Letters, Lectures and Reviews." I will give another instance. "The consciousness of self is manifested only as accompanying any successful representation. At each moment of consciousness I can repeat but I, I, I, and always I: and thus at each moment I vanish to be produced again. . . . There is nothing enduring, neither without me nor within me; only an unceasing change. I know of no existence, not even my own. There is no existence. I myself know nothing, and am nothing. Images alone are present in consciousness. . . . I myself am one of those images; or rather I am not even this. All reality is changed into a wondrous dream, without a life to dream of, and without a mind to dream, a dream composed of a dream of itself. Perception is a dream; thought is a dream of that dream." (Fichte's Werke, ii., p. 244, 245, quoted from Mansel.)

Again: "Pure being has no distinguishing marks; in other words it is identical with pure Nothing. And thus by placing the principle of existence in the abstraction of all definiteness, we arrive at the first axiom of Hegel's philosophy—the identity of existence and non-existence." (Mansel, p. 208.)

Yet once again. Spinoza's description of God "extended, yet incorporeal; thinking, yet without understanding; free and active, yet without will." (P. 349.)

NOTE C. (P. 164.)

THE NATURE OF GOD.

One chief endeavour of non-Christian Philosophers, whether physicists or psychologists, is, if possible, to do away with the belief in a Personal God as revealed to us in the Bible. Hence the strange and uncouth dogmas which have been put forth. Mr. Matthew Arnold says that "God is simply the stream of tendency by which all things fulfil the law of their being," or "the enduring power, not ourselves, which maketh for righteousness." Schelling calls God "the Absolute Ego;" others pronounce Him to be "the Unknown and Unknowable," "the Absolute and Unconditioned," "the Force, or Law, or Order of Nature," "the Anima Mundi," "All things," anything in short but the God of Christians, who believe, as we have been taught in childhood, and as the experience of mature years confirms to us that God is our FATHER, Which is in heaven, our Redeemer, our Sanctifier, Maker of all things, Judge of all men, and that our simple duty towards Him is to believe in Him, and love Him, and worship Him, and to serve Him truly all the days of our life.

Surely the child who knows his duty to God is greater and wiser than many a nineteenth century philosopher.

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